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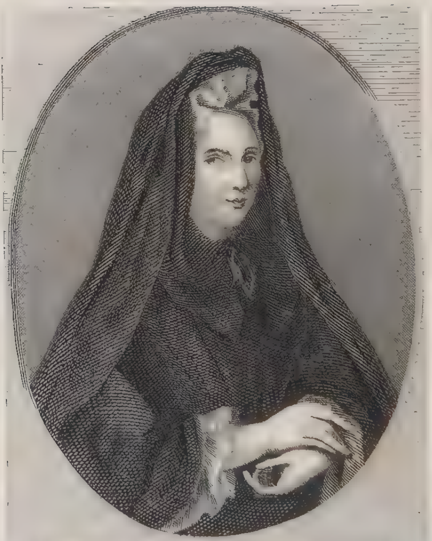

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J R A Onslow

LIFE

AND

RELIGIOUS OPINIONS AND EXPERIENCE

OF

MADAME DE LA MOTHE GUYON:

TOGETHER WITH

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE PERSONAL HISTORY AND RELIGIOUS OPINIONS

OF

FENELON, ARCHBISHOP OF CAMBRAY.

BY THOMAS C. UPHAM.

PROFESSOR OF MENTAL AND MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN BOWDOIN COLLEGE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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By THOMAS C. UPHAM,

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PREFACE.

I HAD read the life and writings of Madame Guyon with interest, and I think with profit. The impression made upon my own mind was similar to that which has been made upon the minds of others. And this impression was, that the facts of her history and her opinions are too valuable to be lost. They make a portion, not only of ecclesiastical history, but of the history of the human mind. Under these circumstances, and in the hope of contributing something to the cause of truth and of vital religion, I have undertaken the present work.

In giving some account of Madame Guyon's life, it will be seen in what has been related, that I have made great use of her auto-biography. The origin of this remarkable work, entitled in French, in which language alone it has been printed in full, *La Vie de Madame de la Mothe Guyon, écrite par elle-même*, was this. After her return from Italy in 1686, La Combe, her spiritual Director, in accordance as I suppose with the authority allowed him by his church, an authority to which she readily submitted, required her to

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make a written record of her past life. This she did for the most part, when she was shut up, a year or two afterwards, in the Convent of St. Marie in Paris. She proposed, as she would be likely to do under such circumstances, to use a degree of discretion and to make a selection of incidents; but La Combe, fearful that the delicacy of her feelings might prompt her to multiply omissions, required her to write every thing.

To this she at last consented, especially as she did not, and could not well suppose, that a biography, written under such circumstances, would ever be given to the public. There are some things, therefore, in her personal history, as it is actually given, which cannot be particularly profitable to the reader, because they are obviously unimportant; some things which she herself speaks of as unessential. But if her auto-biography, just as it stands, might be unprofitable and perhaps injurious, it is very evident, I think, that a biography, written on different principles, would be both interesting and beneficial.

To the information, derived from her auto-biography, I have added numerous facts, derived partly from her other writings, and partly from other sources. So that I speak with considerable confidence when I say, that the reader will find, in the following pages, a full account of the life and labors of this remarkable woman.

Not unfrequently she is introduced in the following work, as speaking of herself in the first person; sometimes detailing the outward incidents of her life, and sometimes giving an account of her opinions and inward experience.

It is proper to say here, that, in translating passages where she speaks of herself and her opinions, I have aimed rather to give the sentiment, than the precise mode of expression. In some cases, in order to complete the statement and make it consistent with itself, I have combined what is said in one place with what is said in another. It is sometimes the case, also, that in the original, something, instead of being brought out prominently to notice, is merely *involved* in what is said, or is indistinctly but yet really intimated, which it has been necessary, in order to give a clear idea of the subject, to develope in distinct propositions, and to make a part of the statement, whatever it may be. So that sometimes, instead of a mere rendering of word for word, or a *mere* translation in the ordinary sense of the terms, I give what may be termed perhaps an *interpreted* translation; that is to say, a translation of the spirit rather than of the letter. This course seemed to me a proper one, not only for the reader, but in order to do full justice to Madame Guyon herself. I may add here, that I have availed myself, from time to time, of the aid offered by the judicious translation which Mr. Brooke has made of a portion of her Life, and of the work entitled "A Short Method of Prayer."

The Second Volume of the work is occupied, in a considerable degree, with the acquaintance which was formed in the latter part of her life between Madame Guyon and Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambray; with the influence which was exerted by her over that truly distinguished man; with the religious opinions which were formed and promulgated under that influence, and with the painful results which he experienced in consequence. These details, I think, will be found to communicate important instruction, while they will not fail in interest. The discussions, in this part of the work, turn chiefly upon the doctrine of pure or unselfish love, in the experience of which Fenelon thought, in accordance with the views of Madame Guyon, and it seems to me with a good deal of reason, that the sanctification of the heart essentially consists. It is true, that they insist strongly upon the subjection of the will; but they maintain, as they very well may maintain, that such a love will certainly carry the will with it.

The work is committed to the reader, not without a sense of its imperfections, but still in the hopes that something has been done to illustrate character, and to confirm the truth.

THOMAS C. UPHAM.

Brunswick, Maine, 1846.

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CATALOGUE

OF SOME OF THE WORKS WHICH HAVE BEEN CONSULTED.

Œuvres de Fénélon, Archevêque de Cambrai, précédées d'Etudes sur sa Vie, par M. Aimé-Martin. 4to.

Œuvres Complètes de Bossuet, Évêque de Meaux. 4to.

Dictionnaire Historique des Cultes Religieux établis dans le Monde. Paris, 1770.

Recueil de Diverses Pièces concernant Le Quiêtisme et les Quiêtistes, ou Molinos, ses Sentiméns, et ses Disciples. Amsterdam, 1688.

Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, and other principal Saints, by Rev. Alvan Butler.

Les Œuvres de St. Thérèse, par Arnauld D'Andilly, à Paris, 1702.

Memoires du Duc de St. Simon, 13 vols. 8vo.

Dictionnaire Critique de Bayle, 5 vols. in folio.

La Vie de Madame de la Mothe Guyon, écrite par elle-même; and other works of Madame Guyon.

A Tour to Alet and La Grande Chartreuse, by M. Claude Lancelot, author of the Port Royal Grammars, edited by Mary Anne Schimmelpenninck.

Memoirs of the Court of France, from the year 1684 to the year 1720, translated from the Diary of the Marquis de Dangeau.

The Life of Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambrai, compiled from original manuscripts, by M. L. F. De Bausset, Bishop of Alais, translated by William Mudford.

La Vie de Messire Jean D'Aranthon D'Alex, Evêque et Prince de Geneve. Lyons, 1699.

A Dissertation on Pure Love, by the Archbishop of Cambray, with some Account of the Life and Writings of the Lady on whose account he was banished from Court; together with an Apologetic Preface. Dublin, 1739.

La Biographie Universelle.

Dictionnaire Géographique et Critique, par M. Bruzen La Martiniere.

Relation de L'Origine, du Progrès, et de la Condemnation du Quiêtisme repandu en France, avec Plusieurs Anecdotes Curieuses. 1732.

Errors regarding Religion and Thoughts on Prayer at the Present Time, by James Douglas, Esq. New York, 1831.

The Practice of Devotion, or a Treatise on Divine Love, translated from the French of M. Jurieu..

Avis sur les Differens Etats de L'Oraison Mentale, contenus dans plusieurs Lettres écrites par un Solitaire à un de ses Disciples. Paris, 1710.

Life and Experience of the celebrated Lady Guyon, translated from the French, exhibiting her eminent Piety, Travels, and Sufferings. [Anonymous, but correctly ascribed to Thomas Digby Brooke.]

Choise d'Ouvrages Mystiques avec Notices Littéraires, par J. A. C. Buchon.

The Life of Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambray, by Charles Butler, Esq.

La Théologie de l'Amour, ou La Vie et les Œuvres de St. Catharine de Gênes.

Together with many other works, which have a connection with the philosophy and the developments of that higher form of religious experience, which it was the object of the lives and writings of Madame Guyon and Fenelon to illustrate.

LIFE AND RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

OF

MADAME GUYON.

CHAPTER I.

Time and place of her birth. Her parentage. Sickness in her infancy. Her residence at the Ursuline Seminary at Montargis. Duchess Montbason. Residence at the Benedictine Seminary. A dream. Early religious impressions. Singular experiment on the strength of her faith, made by the girls in the Seminary. Unfavorable results. Taken home. The treatment she received there.

THE subject of this Memoir was born the thirteenth of April, 1648. She was baptized the same year, on the twenty-fourth of May. Her father's name was Claude Bouviéres De La Mothe. The place of her birth was Montargis, a French town of some note, situated about fifty miles to the south of Paris, in the part of France known previously to the French Revolution as the Province of Orleanois.

2. Of her parents we know but little. It would seem, however, that they were very worthy people, holding a highly honorable position among the leading families of Montargis, and that both of them, especially the father, were deeply impressed with religious sentiments. Her father bore the title of Seigneur or Lord de La Mothe Vergonville. Her

father and mother had both been previously married; and both had children previous to their second marriage. The father had a son and daughter; the mother had a daughter; and these were their only children, so far as we have any account, when they became united with each other. The subject of this Memoir, whose remarkable personal and religious history has made her an object of interest to succeeding ages, was the offspring of this second marriage. Her maiden name was Jeanne Marie Bouviéres De La Mothe.

3. In very early infancy she was afflicted with a complaint, which reduced her to such extremity, that her life was for some time despaired of. To her narrow escape from death at this period, she refers in after life, with feelings which her religious experience was naturally calculated to inspire. Her life had its vicissitudes, its trials, its deep sorrows; but in view of the sanctification which had attended them, she was deeply thankful, that God had been pleased to spare her. "It is owing," she says, "to thy goodness, O God, that there now remains to me the consolation of having sought and followed Thee; of having laid myself upon the altar of sacrifice in the strength of pure love; of having labored for thine interests and glory. In the commencement of my earthly existence death and life seemed to combat together; but life proved victorious over death. Oh, might I but hope, that, in the conclusion of my being here on earth, life will be forever victorious over death! Doubtless it will be so, if Thou alone dost live in me, O my God, who art at present my only Life, my only Love."

4. In the city of Montargis, where her father resided, was a seminary for the instruction of young girls, under the care of the Ursuline Nuns.* The Ursulines are a sisterhood of religious persons, who bind themselves, in addition to other

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* See the work, entitled Nouvelle Description de la France, vol. x. p. 343, as compared with her Life.

vows of a more strictly religious character, to occupy themselves in the education of children of their own sex. At the age of two years and a half, she was sent from home, and placed at the Ursuline Seminary, but remained there only for a short time. When she was taken from the Ursuline Institution, she remained for a time at the residence of her parents; but for some reason not clearly understood, but probably in part from an imperfect view of the value of parental influence, was left by her mother chiefly in the care of the domestics of the family. In after life she refers to this period as one in which her mental and moral culture, such as she was even then capable of receiving, was not properly attended to. She speaks of it also as a period in which she incurred, in repeated instances, those dangers, from which she sometimes narrowly escaped, which are incidental to the sports and to the thoughtless and venturesome spirit of childhood. But God, who had designs of mercy for her own soul, and through her instrumentality for the souls of others, protected her.

5. It was in the year 1652, that a lady of distinguished rank, the Duchess of Montbason, who wished probably to avail herself of the means of religious retirement and instruction which they afforded, came to reside with the Benedictines, another religious body, distinct from the Ursulines, who had established themselves at Montargis. The daughter of M. De La Mothe was then four years of age. At the solicitation of the Duchess, who was an intimate acquaintance and friend of her father, and who said it would be a source of great satisfaction to her to have the company of his little daughter, she was placed with the Benedictines. "Here I saw," she says, in the Account of her Life, which she afterwards wrote, "none but good examples; and as I was naturally disposed to yield to the influence of such examples, I followed them when I found nobody to turn me in another

direction. Young as I was, I loved to hear of God, to be at church, and to be dressed in the habit of a little Nun." *

6. While resident at the House of the Benedictines, though early in life, she appears to have received some religious ideas, and to have been the subject of some religious impressions. She speaks in particular of a dream, in which she seemed to have a very distinct conception of the ultimate misery of impenitent sinners, as making a deep impression on her mind. Aroused by the images of terror which were then presented to her, and operated upon by other circumstances which were calculated to awaken her religious sensibilities, she became very thoughtful, and exhibited at this early period a considerable interest in religious things. She was too young to appreciate fully the relation existing between herself and the Infinite Mind; but the idea of God was so far developed to her opening but vigorous conceptions, that she inwardly and deeply recognized his claims to her homage and her love. She endeavored to conform to these convictions, not only by doing in other respects whatever seemed to be the will of God, but by openly and frankly expressing her determination to lead a religious life. Happy in these solemn views and determinations, she one day, with a frankness perhaps greater than her prudence, remarked in the presence of her associates, that she was ready to become a martyr for God. The girls who resided with her at the Benedictines, not altogether pleased that one so young should go so far before them in a course so honorable, and supposing perhaps that they discovered some ingredients of human pride mingling with religious sincerity, came to the conclusion to test such enlarged pretensions. By representations more nicely adjusted than either true or honorable, they persuaded her that God in his provi-

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* La Vie de Madame Guyon, ecrite par Elle-meme, Pt. I, ch. 2d.

dences had suddenly but really called her to the endurance of that martyrdom for which she had exhibited and professed a mind so fully prepared. They found her true to what she had previously professed. And having permitted her to offer up her private supplications, they conducted her to a room selected for the purpose, with all those circumstances of deliberateness and solemnity, which were appropriate to so marked an occasion. They spread a cloth upon the floor, upon which she was required to kneel, and which was destined to receive her blood. One of the older girls then appeared in the character of an executioner, and lifted a large cutlass, with the apparent intention of separating her head from her body. At this critical moment, overcome by her fears, which were stronger than her young faith, she cried out, *that she was not at liberty to die without the consent of her father.* The girls, in the spirit of triumph, declared that it was a mere excuse to escape what was prepared for her. And assuring her that God would not accept as a martyr one who had not a martyr's spirit, they insultingly let her go.

7. This transaction, which was so cruel in its application, although it probably originated in thoughtlessness as much or more than in unkindness, had a marked effect upon her mind. Young as she was, she was old enough to perceive, that she had not only been open but voluntary in her professions; that she had been tried, and been found wanting. Those religious consolations, which she had previously experienced, departed. Something in her conscience reproached her, that she either wanted courage or faith, to act and to suffer, under all circumstances and without any reserve, in the cause of her heavenly Father. It seemed to her, in the agitation of her spirit, that she had offended him, and that there was now but little hope of his support and favor. Thus, as in many other similar cases, the religious

tendency, unkindly crushed in the very bud of its promise, withered and died.

8. During her residence at the House of the Benedictines she was treated with great kindness. In one instance only was she the subject of punishment on the part of those who had the charge of her; and this seems to have happened in consequence of the misapprehension, or the designed misstatement of her young associates. Her health, however, was exceedingly poor. And soon after the transactions just now mentioned, she was taken home, in consequence of frequent and severe turns of indisposition. She complains that she was again left almost exclusively in the care of domestics; and that consequently she did not meet with that attention to her morals and manners, which would have been desirable. Certain it is, as a general statement, that domestics are not in a situation to discharge, in behalf of young children, all those duties which may reasonably and justly be expected of parents. It might be unjust, however, even where appearances are unfavorable, to ascribe to parents intentional neglect, without a full knowledge of all the circumstances.

CHAPTER II.

Placed a second time at the Ursuline Seminary. Character and kindness of her paternal half-sister. Interview with Henrietta Maria, the Queen of England, at her father's house. Explanations of this interview. References to her moral and religious feelings. Transferred from the care of the Ursulines to that of the Dominicans. A Bible left in her room. Her study of it. Proposes to partake of the Eucharist. Remarks.

We have already had occasion to notice, that the parents of Mademoiselle De La Mothe had both sustained the marriage relation previously to their marriage with each other. And each of them had a daughter in their first marriage. These two daughters, acting on the principles and methods of personal consecration which are recognized in the Roman Catholic church, had devoted themselves to a religious life in the Ursuline Convent, and thus became associated in its system of instruction. After having been taken from the Benedictine Seminary, and spending some time at home in a manner not very profitable, Mademoiselle Jeanne Marie, their young half-sister, who had already spent a little time there in her early childhood, was once more placed at the Ursulines with them. She was now in the seventh year of her age. The father, who seems to have been sensible, from what had fallen under his own notice, that her education had hitherto failed to receive sufficient attention, commended her to the especial care of his own daughter, as the best qualified of the two half-sisters, by kindness of disposition as well as in other respects, to aid in the developement of her mind and the formation of her manners. In her after life, as she recalled with gratitude the dealings of God with her in her younger years, she spoke in affectionate terms of this sister, as a person characterized alike by good judgment and by religious sentiments, and as especially fitted to train up young girls.

2. "This good sister," she says, "employed her time in instructing me in piety, and in such branches of learning as were suitable to my age and capacity. She was possessed of good talents, which she improved well. She spent much time in prayer, and her faith seemed strong and pure. She denied herself of every other satisfaction, in order that she might be with me and give me instruction. So great was her affection for me, that she experienced, as she told me herself, more pleasure with me than anywhere else. Certain it is, that she thought herself well paid for her efforts in my behalf, whenever I made suitable answers on the studies in which I was engaged. Under her care I soon became mistress of most of those things which were suitable for me; so much so that many grown persons, of some rank and figure in the world, could not have exhibited such evidence of proficiency and knowledge as I did." *

3. At this period of her life an incident occurred, which seems to require some explanation. The period of which we are now speaking, was subsequent in time to the great Civil War in England, which resulted in the death of Charles First, the establishment of a new government, and the expulsion of the surviving members of the royal family. Charles had married Henrietta Maria, the daughter of Henry Fourth, and sister of Lewis Thirteenth of France.

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* La Vie de Madame J. M. Bouviéres De La Mothe Guyon, ch. 3d.

In consequence of the unfavorable turn of the Civil War, she fled from England to her own country in 1644; residing for the most part, in sorrow and in poverty, in the Convent of Chaillot, at that time a village in the neighborhood of Paris, but now making a part of the city itself. She died in 1669; and it is worthy of notice, that her death furnished occasion for one of the most celebrated of the Funeral Orations of Bossuet.*

4. Some years after her flight from England to France, this distinguished person visited the city of Montargis. And when we recollect, that the family of M. De La Mothe held a high rank in that city, and especially when we consider that there were probably some common grounds of religious sympathy and attachment, it will not be surprising that Henrietta Maria should have honored them with a visit. This statement will help to explain an incident which we find in the early life of the subject of this Memoir. It is related in her Auto-biography, that, while she was at the Seminary of the Ursulines, she was frequently sent for by her father, who was desirous of seeing her from time to time at home. On one of these occasions she says that she found at her father's house the *Queen of England;* a circumstance which would seem very improbable, except in connection with the historical facts which have just now been mentioned. This seems to have been in the year 1655, or about that time. She was then near eight years of age. "My father told the Queen's Confessor, that, if he wanted a little amusement, he might entertain himself with me, and propound some questions to me. He tried me with several very difficult ones, to which I returned such correct answers,

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* See Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, Bossuet's Oraisons Funêbres, Voltaire's Life of Lewis Fourteenth, vol. 2d, Martiniere's Dictionnaire Critique, art. Chaillot.

that he carried me to the Queen, and said to her, 'Your Majesty must have some diversion with this child.' She also tried me, and was so well satisfied and pleased with my lively answers and my manners, that she not only requested my father to place me with her, but urged her proposition with no small importunity, assuring him that she would take particular care of me, and going so far as to intimate, that she would make me Maid of Honor to the princess, her daughter. Her desire for me was so great, that the refusal of my father evidently disobliged her. Doubtless it was God who caused this refusal, and who in doing so turned off the stroke, which might have probably intercepted my salvation. Weak as I then was, how could I have withstood the temptations and distractions, incidental to a connection with persons so high in rank?" *

5. After this interview with a person, signalized by her rank and her misfortunes, she went back as usual to the Ursuline Seminary, where her paternal half-sister, to whose kindness her father had particularly entrusted her continued her affectionate care. But her authority was limited; she could not control, in all respects, the conduct of the other girls who boarded there, with whom the younger sister, Jeanne Marie, was sometimes obliged to associate, and from whom she acknowledges, in the account she has given of her life, that she contracted some bad habits. She ceased to be entirely strict and scrupulous in the utterance of the truth; she became in some degree peevish in her temper, and careless and undevout in her religious feelings, passing whole days without thinking of God. But happily she did not remain long under the power of such vicious tendencies and habits. Her sister's unwearied watchfulness and assiduity were the means, with the divine blessing, of recovering her

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* La Vie, ch. 3d.

from this temporary declension. And she remained at the Seminary some time longer, always making rapid improvement when she was in the enjoyment of good health, and conciliating the esteem of her associates and instructors, by her regular and virtuous deportment, as well as by her proficiency in knowledge.

6. At ten years of age she was taken home again. After a short residence at home, she was placed at the Dominican Convent, probably the same of which De La Force gives so particular an account in his work, entitled *Nouvelle Description De La France.* It was founded in 1242. "I stayed," she says, "only a little while at home. The reason of my remaining so short a time was this: A Nun of the Dominican Order, who belonged to a distinguished family, and was an intimate friend of my father, solicited him to place me in her Convent, of which she was Prioress. This lady had conceived a great affection for me; and she promised my father, that she would take care of me herself, and would make me lodge in her own chamber. But circumstances occurred, which prevented her from fulfilling her intentions. Various troubles arose in the Religious Community, of which she had the charge, which necessarily occupied her attention; so that she was not in a situation to take much care of me."

7. Her opportunities for intellectual improvement, during her residence in the Dominican Convent, where she continued during eight months, were interrupted in some degree by sickness. But with a mind of naturally enlarged capacity, and which seemed to have an instinct for knowledge, she could hardly fail to improve. During her residence at this place, she was left more with herself than had been customary with her. But her solitary hours, secluded as she was in a great degree from objects that might have distracted her attention, were not unprofitable ones. One cir-

cumstance which occurred at this time, is worthy of particular notice. The pupils of the Convent, although they received religious instruction in other ways, do not appear to have been put in possession of the Bible, and to have had the use of it in private. A Bible, however, had been providentially left, by whose instrumentality or from what motive is unknown, in the chamber which was assigned to Mademoiselle De La Mothe. Young as she was, she seems to have had a heart to appreciate, in some degree, the value of this heaven-sent gift. "*I spent whole days,*" she says, "*in reading it; giving no attention to other books or other subjects from morning to night. And having great powers of recollection, I committed to memory the historical parts entirely.*" It is certainly not improbable that these solitary perusals of the Bible had an influence on her mind through life, not only in enlarging its sphere of thought and activity, but by teaching her to look to God alone for direction, and by laying deep and broad the foundations of that piety which she subsequently experienced.

8. She remained at the Convent of the Dominicans eight months, after which she returned home. When she entered upon the twelfth year of her age, she proposed to partake of the sacrament of the Eucharist. She acknowledges that for some time previous she had been remiss in religious duties. Some jealousies and disaffections, as is not unfrequently the case, had sprung up among the younger members of her father's family. A feeling of dissatisfaction and melancholy seems to have entered her mind. And as if weary of God, she gave up what little religious inclination and feeling she had, saying, "she was none the better for it," and wickedly implying in the remark, that the troubles connected with religion exceeded the benefits resulting from it. I think it would not be correct to say, that she had given up religion; but rather had given up many favorable

feelings and many outward practices, which have a connection with religion. And this remark will perhaps be the better understood, when we say in explanation, that, although she had been interested in religion, it does not appear that she possessed those traits or qualities which really constitute it. Prompted, partly by example, and partly by serious impressions, she had sought it, but had not found it. Her religious interest, as we have already had occasion to notice, varied at different times. At one time, in particular, it seems to have been very great. She seems to have had convictions of sin; she had some desires to live in God's guidance and favor; she formed good resolutions; she had a degree of inward consolation. But when we examine these experiences closely, I think we shall find reason for saying, that such desires, convictions, and resolutions, which often lay near the surface of the mind without stirring very much its inward depths, were, in her case at least, the incidents and preparatives of religion, rather than religion itself. The great inward Teacher, the Holy Ghost, had not as yet dispossessed the natural life, and given a new life in Christ. She herself intimates that her religion was chiefly in appearance; and that self, and not the love of God, was at the bottom.

9. The suggestion to partake of the sacrament of the Supper, and thus by an outward act at least, to array herself more distinctly on the Lord's side, seems to have originated with her father. In order to bring about what he had near at heart, and which was in accordance with the principles of the church of which he was a member, he placed her again at the Ursuline Seminary. Her paternal half-sister, who still resided there, and who appears to have had some increased and leading responsibility as an instructress, pleased with the suggestion, but at the same time aware of her unfortunate state of mind, labored assiduously to give rise to

better inward dispositions. The labors of this patient and affectionate sister, who knew what it was both to believe and to pray, and for whom religion seems to have had a charm above every thing else, were so effectual, that Jeanne Marie now thought, as she expresses it, "*of giving herself to God in good earnest.*" The day at length arrived; she felt that the occasion was too important to be trifled with; she made an outward confession of her sins, with apparent sincerity and devoutness, and partook of the sacramental element for the first time with a considerable degree of satisfaction. But the result showed that the heart was not reached. The day of her redemption had not come. The season and its solemnity passed away, without leaving an effectual impression. The sleeping passions were again awaked. "My faults and failings," she says, "were soon repeated, and drew me off from the care and the duties of religion." She grew tall; her features began to develope themselves into that beauty which afterwards distinguished her. Her mother, pleased with her appearance, indulged her in dress. The combined power of her personal and mental attractions were felt in the young and unreflecting attachments of persons of the other sex. The world resumed its influence, and Christ was in a great degree forgotten.

10. Such are the changes which often take place in the early history of religious experience. To-day there are serious thoughts, awakened and quickened feelings, and good resolutions; every thing wears a propitious aspect. To-morrow, purposes are abandoned, feelings vanish; and the reality of the world takes the place of the anticipations of religion. To-day the hearts of mothers and sisters, and of other friends, who have labored long and prayed earnestly for the salvation of those who are dear to them, are cheered and gladdened. To-morrow they find the solicitations to pleasure prevailing over the exhortations to virtue; and those who

had been serious and humble for a time, returning again to the world. But it is often the case, that these alternations of feeling, which it is not easy always to explain, have an important connection, under the administration of a higher and divine providence, with the most favorable results.

11. They may, in many cases, be regarded as constituting a necessary part of that inward training, which the soul must pass through, before it reaches the position of true submission and of permanent love. They show us the great strength of that attachment which binds us to attractions which perish, the things of time and sense. They leave a deep impression of the forbearance and long-suffering of God. They teach the necessity of the special and powerful operations of divine grace, without which the heart, naturally alienated from all attachment to the true object of its love, would perish in its worldly idolatry.

CHAPTER III.

Visit from her cousin De Toissi, Missionary to Cochin China. Results of this visit. Renewed religious efforts. Endeavors to obtain salvation by works rather than by faith. Return of spiritual declension. Account which she gives of her own feelings and conduct at this time. Remarks.

About this time the Catholic church of France, desirous to spread abroad the Christian religion where it was yet unknown, was enlarging its missions in the East. Among the individuals whose piety led them to engage in this benevolent work, was a nephew of M. De La Mothe. His name was De Toissi; the same individual, of whom some account is given in the History of Foreign Missions, *Relation des Missions Etrangéres*, under the name of De Chamesson. This young man, in company with one of the French bishops, the titular bishop of Heliopolis, had commenced his journey to the place of his labors in Cochin China; and in passing through Montargis, had called at the residence of his uncle. His visit was short; but characterized as it was by the circumstance, that he was about to leave his native land perhaps forever, and on business too that was infinitely dear to the heart of humanity and religion, it was full of interest. He was one of those, who could say in the sweet language of the subject of this Memoir, when in after life she suffered in prison and in exile,

"My country, Lord, art Thou alone;
No other can I claim or own;
The point, where all my wishes meet,
My Law, my Love, life's only sweet."

Mademoiselle De La Mothe had gone out at the time of this short but deeply interesting visit of her pious cousin; a visit incidental to a journey undertaken from religious considerations, and which, therefore, could not well be delayed from purely worldly motives. "I happened," she says, "at that time to be gone a-walking with my companions, which I seldom did. At my return he was gone. They gave me an account of his sanctity, and of the things he had said. I was so touched with it, that I was overcome with sorrow. I cried all the rest of the day and of the night."

2. This was one of those incidents in the Providence of God, which come home to the heart. How often has the mere sight of a truly pious man brought the hardened sinner under conviction! How often have those who have been unmoved by the most eloquent religious appeals, been deeply affected by the most simple and unpretending words, when uttered under circumstances favorable to such a result. When she heard the statement of the deep and devoted piety of her cousin De Toissi, the thoughts of Mademoiselle De La Mothe, on the principle of contrast rather than of resemblance, naturally reverted to herself. She remembered how often God had called her to himself; and how often she had listened without obeying, or had obeyed without persevering in obedience. "What!" she exclaimed to a pious person, who acted as her Confessor and religious teacher, "am I the only person in our family to be lost! Alas! Help me in my salvation." Her whole soul was roused to a sense of her situation. She recalled with deep compunction her repeated seasons of seriousness and religious inquiry, and of subsequent declension. "Alas!" she exclaimed, "what grief I now sustained for having displeased God! What regrets! What exclamations! What tears of sorrow!" Once more she endeavored to bring her mind to a religious frame. Once more she applied herself

to the task of her soul's salvation, apparently with great sincerity and earnestness; but without being able to find the simple way of acceptance by *faith*. She resisted her passions, which were liable to be strongly moved; and her efforts were attended with a considerable degree of success. She asked the forgiveness of those, whom she was so unhappy as to have displeased. Appreciating, in some degree, the relation between religion and practical benevolence, she visited the poor, gave them food and clothing, and taught them the catechism. She spent much time in private reading and praying. She purchased and read some of the practical and devotional books which were most highly valued among her people, such as the Life of Madame de Chantal and the works of St. Francis de Sales. She inscribed the name of the Savior in large characters upon a piece of paper; and so attached it to her person as to be continually reminded of him. With an erroneous notion of expiating her sin by her own suffering, she voluntarily subjected herself to various bodily austerities. Determining to leave nothing undone which seemed to furnish any hope of spiritual improvement, it is worthy of notice that she made a vow, in imitation of the devout Madame de Chantal, of ever aiming at the highest perfection, and of doing the will of God in everything. This undoubtedly was an important resolution, which, we may reasonably suppose, would have been followed by the happiest consequences, if it had not been made too much in her own strength, and in ignorance of the great renovating principle, that all true strength is derived from God through Christ by *faith*. Among other things which characterized her mental exercises and her efforts at this time, it appears that she came to the resolution, if Providence should permit, to enter into a Convent, and in the apparent hopelessness of aid from any other source, to secure her spiritual interests and her salvation by becoming a Nun. This part of her plan, which showed the depth of her feeling on the subject which now occupied her mind, was frustrated by her father, who was tenderly attached to her, and who, while he was earnestly desirous that his daughter might become truly religious, supposed that she might possess religion without separating from her family, and without an entire seclusion from the world.

3. The Infinite Mind, no doubt, beheld and sympathized in the anxiety which she felt, and in the efforts she made. God is not indifferent, he never can be indifferent, to those who *strive* to enter in. He numbers all their tears; he registers all their resolves. How can it be otherwise? If the state of mind be that of true striving after God, he himself has inspired it. Has he no feeling, no sympathy for his own work? It is true that he sometimes permits those whom he determines eventually to bless, to strive long, and perhaps to wander in erroneous ways. But the result of this painful experience will be, that they will ultimately understand much better than they otherwise would have done, the direction and the issue of the true path. They have a lesson to learn which cannot well be dispensed with; and God therefore is willing that they should learn it. What that lesson is, it is not always easy to say, in individual cases. Perhaps the remains of self-confidence exist within them, which can be removed only by the experience of the sorrows which are attendant upon the errors it invariably commits. And accordingly God leaves them to test the value of human wisdom. They try it; they fall into mistakes; they are overwhelmed with confusion; and then, and not till then, they see the necessity and importance of reposing all their confidence in Him, who alone can guide them in safety.

4. Mademoiselle De La Mothe continued in the state of mind which we have described, about a year. But this strong religious tendency also had its end. What it was which led

to the termination of religious prospects so flattering, it is difficult to state with entire confidence. There is some reason for thinking, however, that the love of God, not far from this time, began to be disturbed by the accession and influence of a love, which was more mixed and earthly in its origin. She relates that her father with his family left the city of Montargis, in order to spend some days in the country; and that he took with him a very accomplished young gentleman, one of his near relations. This young man, of whom she speaks in high terms for his religious sentiments, as well as his intellectual and other accomplishments, became much attached to her. She was still young, being only in her fourteenth year. She gives us to understand, that this individual, notwithstanding the circumstance of her immature age, made propositions of marriage. And this, after a suitable time, would probably have been the result, with the cordial consent of all the parties concerned, if it had not been met by the obstacle, that their relationship was so near as to bring them within the degrees of consanguinity, in which marriage is prohibited in the Catholic Church. This obstacle, it is true, could have been removed by a dispensation from the Papal See; but still it was one of so serious a nature, that her father did not think it proper to give his consent. Still they were mutually pleased, and spent much time in each other's company. It was at the time of this attachment, that she says significantly and penitently, that she "began to seek in the creature what she had previously found in God." But we will let her describe her spiritual declension in her own language.

5. In connection with a reference to her daily interviews with this young relative, she says, "I left off prayer. I became as a vineyard exposed to pillage, whose hedges, torn down, give liberty to all the creatures to ravage it. *I began to seek in the creature what I had found in God.* And thou,

oh my God! didst leave me to myself, *because I left thee first*, and wast pleased, in permitting me to sink into the horrible pit, to make me see and feel the necessity of maintaining a state of continual watchfulness and communion with thyself. Thou hast taught thy people, that thou wilt destroy those who, by indulging wrongly-placed affections, depart from thee.* Alas! their departure alone causes their destruction; since in departing from Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, they enter into the region of darkness and the shadow of death. And there, bereft of all true strength, they will remain. It is not possible that they should ever arise again, unless Thou shalt revisit them; unless Thou shalt restore them to light and life, by illuminating their darkness, and by melting their icy hearts. Thou didst leave me to myself, because I left Thee first. But such was Thy goodness, that it seemed to me, that Thou *didst leave me with regret*."

6. The account which she gives of her inward state at this time, is an exceedingly painful one. "I readily gave way," she says, "to sallies of passion. I failed in being strictly conscientious and careful in the utterance of the truth. I became not only vain, but corrupt in heart. Although I kept up some outward religious appearances, religion itself, as a matter of inward experience, had become to me a matter of indifference. I spent much time, both day and night, in reading romances, those strange inventions to destroy youth. I was proud of my personal appearance, so much so that, contrary to my former practices, I began to pass a good deal of my time before the mirror. I found so much pleasure in viewing myself in it, that I thought others were in the right, who practised the same. Instead of making use of this exterior, which God gave me as a means of

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* Ps. lxxiii. 27.

loving him more, it became to me the unhappy source of a vain and sinful self-complacency. All seemed to me to look beautiful in my person; but in my declension and darkness I did not then perceive, that the outward beauty covered *a sinful and fallen soul.*"

7. But this was not the judgment which the world then passed upon her; the world so severe in the exaction of its own claims, but so indulgent in mitigating the claims of God. Under a form that was outwardly beautiful, and veiled by manners that had received the most correct and advantageous culture, it was not easy for man to perceive the elements and workings of a heart which harbored moral and religious rebellion. In the eye of the world, therefore, which is but imperfectly capable of penetrating beyond the exterior, and which delights in elegance of form and perfection of manners, there was but little to blame, and much to praise; but in the eye of God, which sees and estimates the inmost motive, it was not possible for outward beauty to furnish a compensation for inward deformity. And in using the phrase inward deformity, we do not necessarily mean, that she was worse than many others who have a reputation for good morals. Estimating her by the world's standard, she had her good qualities, as well as those of an opposite character, her excellences as well as her defects. Nevertheless, there was that wanting which constitutes the soul's true light, without which all other beauty fades, and all other excellence is but excellence in name, — *the love of God in the heart.*

CHAPTER IV.

Removal from Montargis to Paris. Louis the Fourteenth. Characteristics of the age. Effect of her removal to Paris upon her character. Her personal appearance at this period. Offers of marriage. Is married to M. Guyon in March, 1664. *Notices of the family of M. Guyon.*

Sometime in the year 1663, M. De La Mothe removed his family from Montargis to the city of Paris, — a step which obviously was not calculated to benefit his daughter, in the religious sense of the term. Paris was at that time, as it is now, the centre of scientific culture and of the arts, of refinement of manners and of fashionable gayety. Louis the Fourteenth was then the reigning sovereign of France, — a man of considerable powers of intellect, and of great energy of will,— in whom two leading desires predominated — the one to make France great, the other to make himself the source and centre of her greatness. The greatness of France, sustained and illustrated in the wisdom and splendor of her great monarch — this, it is very obvious, was the central and powerful element of his system of action. Hence the expense and labor which he bestowed upon the royal palaces, and upon all the great public works which could be considered as having a national character; hence his vast efforts to enrich and beautify the city of Versailles, which he had selected as the principal seat of his residence; hence his desire to attach to his person, and to rank among the attendants of his Court, the most distinguished of his nobles. His munificence to men of literature, his patronage of the arts, the pomp and ceremony which characterized all great public occasions, all sprung from the same source.*

2. All France, and particularly the city of Paris, felt an influence so well adapted to harmonize with the tendencies of the human heart. If it was an age that was characterized by many noble efforts in literature and the arts, it was an age also that was equally characterized by its unfounded pretensions, its vanity, and its voluptuousness. Almost everything, especially in the capital of France, was calculated to dispossess the sentiment of humility, and to impart an exaggerated turn of mind. The sights and sounds which were presented to notice; the displays of wealth, which were made in every street; the crowded populace, intoxicated with the celebrity of their sovereign and of their nation; the vulgar and the fashionable amusements, which were without end; all were calculated to divert the mind from serious reflection — to lead it to sympathize with the senses, and to dissociate it from its own inward centre; a state of things which would have been a severe trial even to established piety.

3. It is not surprising that this unpropitious state of things, which developed itself to its full extent in the proud city to which her parents had removed, should have had an unfavorable effect upon the mind of Mademoiselle De La Mothe; and accordingly she intimates, in the record of her feelings, as she remembered them to have been in this part of her life, that she began to entertain exaggerated ideas of herself, and that her *vanity increased.* This was the natural result of her new position. Her parents, as well as herself,

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* See the Life of Louis Fourteenth by Voltaire, and the Memoirs of the Court of France, by the Marquis De Dangeau. The latter writer states that thirty-six thousand laborers were employed at Versailles at one time.

led astray by the new state of society in which they found themselves, spared no cost in obtaining whatever might make her appear to advantage. The world, illuminated with false lights to her young vision, seemed to be in reality what it was chiefly in appearance, and consequently presented itself as an object worth conquering and possessing. It was at this period that she gave to it, more warmly and unreservedly than at any other, that kindling heart and expanded intellect, which she afterwards gave to religion. She was tall and well made in her person; refined and prepossessing in her manners, and possessed of remarkable powers of conversation. Her countenance, formed upon the Grecian model, and characterized by a brilliant eye and expansive forehead, had in it a natural majesty, which impressed the beholder with a sentiment of deep respect, while it attracted by its sweetness. Her great powers of mind, (a mind which in the language of one of the writers of the French Encyclopedie was formed for the world, "*fait pour le monde*,") added to the impression which she made on her entrance into Parisian society.*

4. It was under these circumstances that her future husband, M. Jaques Guyon, a man of great wealth, sought her in marriage. He was not the only person whose attention, in this new state of things, was directed to her. "Several apparently advantageous offers of marriage," she says, "were made for me; but God, *unwilling to have me lost*, did not permit them to succeed." In accordance with the custom of the time and country, (a custom oftentimes but little propitious to those who are most deeply concerned,) the arrangements in this important business were made by her father

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* See Remarks on Madame Guyon, in the French Encyclopedie, under the Art. *Montargis*. Also, Relation de l'Origine, du Progrés, et de la Condemnation du Quiétisme en France, p. 4.

and her suitor with but little regard to the opinions and feelings of Mademoiselle De La Mothe. She did not see her designated husband, till a few days before her marriage; and when she did see him, she did not find her affections united to him. She gives us distinctly to understand in her Autobiography, that there were other individuals who sought her, with whom she could have more fully sympathized, and could have been more happy. But a regard for the opinions of her father, in whom she had the greatest confidence, (although in this case he seems to have been influenced too much by the circumstance of the great wealth of M. Guyon,) overruled every other consideration. She signed the articles of marriage, but without being permitted to know what they were. She states that the articles were drawn up on the 28th of January, 1664; but it would seem, from a comparison of statements subsequently made, that she was not married till the twenty-first of March of the same year.* She had then nearly completed her sixteenth year. Her husband was thirty-eight.

5. Of the family of her husband we know but little. His father, a man of activity and talent, acquired considerable celebrity by completing the canal of Briare, which connects the Loire with the Seine. This great work, (a work the more remarkable for being the first important one of the kind that was undertaken in France,) was commenced in the reign of Henry Fourth, under the auspices of his distinguished minister, the Duke of Sully. After the death of Henry, and the retirement of Sully from the administration of affairs, the work was suspended till 1638, when Louis Thirteenth made arrangements, on liberal terms, with two individuals, Messrs. Jacques Guyon and another individual by the name of Bouteroue, to complete it. In this way

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* La Vie de Madame Guyon, Pt. I, ch. 22d, §5 as compared with §7

Guyon, who was entirely successful in an undertaking beset with difficulties, was not only brought into public notice, but became very wealthy. He was also rewarded with a patent of nobility at the hands of Cardinal Richelieu, the then leading minister. His wealth, as well as an honorable and noble position in society, seems to have been inherited by his only son, the individual to whom Mademoiselle De La Mothe was thus united in marriage.*

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* La Vie de Madame Guyon, Pt. I, chs. vi, vii. — Memoirs of the Duke of Sully, bk. xix. — Martiniére's Dictionnaire, Art. Canal de Briare. — Relation de l'Origine, du Progrés, et de la Condemnation du Quiétisme, p. 4.

CHAPTER V.

Remarks on her marriage. Treatment she experienced at her husband's house. Unkindness of her mother-in-law. The great incompatibleness of her situation and her character. Her situation considered in its relation to the designs of Providence. Her account of the trials she endured.

It is but reasonable to anticipate, that the union of the sexes and the establishment of families, authorized as they are by nature and by religion, will contribute to happiness. But this propitious result often depends on adjustments of age, of position in life, and of personal character, which are not always properly regarded. In the case before us, the circumstance of great wealth and of noble rank did not compensate for diversity of disposition and for great disparity of age. It could hardly be expected, that Madame Guyon, (as we shall hereafter designate her,) with all her advantages of beauty, talent, and honorable position in society, could be entirely satisfied, at sixteen years of age, with a husband twenty-two years older than herself, whom she had seen but three days before her marriage, and who had obtained her through the principle of filial obedience, rather than through that of warm and voluntary affection.

2. "No sooner," she says, "was I at the house of my husband, than I perceived it would be for me *a house of mourning*. In my father's house every attention had been paid to my manners. In order to cultivate propriety of speech and

command of language, I had been encouraged to speak freely on the various questions which were started in our family circle. There everything was set off in full view; everything was characterized by elegance. But it was very different in the house of my husband, which was chiefly under the direction of his mother, who had long been a widow, and who regarded nothing else but saving. The elegance of my father's house, which I regarded as the result of polite dispositions, they sneered at as pride. In my father's house whatever I said was listened to with attention, and often with applause; but here, if I had occasion to speak, I was listened to only to be contradicted and reproved. If I spoke well, they said I was endeavoring to give them a lesson in good speaking. If I uttered my opinions on any subject of discussion which came up, I was charged with desiring to enter into a dispute; and instead of being applauded, I was simply told to hold my tongue, and was scolded from morning till night. I was very much surprised at this change, and the more so as the vain dreams of my youth anticipated an increase, rather than a diminution of the happiness and the consideration which I had enjoyed.' *

3. The truth is, that she was placed by her marriage in a wrong position; a position untrue to the structure of her mind and unfavorable to her happiness. Nothing else could reasonably have been expected from an arrangement, in which so little regard had been paid to the mutual relations of the parties, in respect to years, early habits, and mental qualities. When considerable unhappiness is experienced in married life, it naturally implies a very considerable diversity in the relative situation and in the character of the parties. But this is not always the case. Sometimes a little diversity in views and a little want of correspondence and

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* La Vie de Madame Guyon, Pt. I, ch. vi, §3, as compared with §4.

sympathy in feelings, furnishing occasion for an irritation which is not great but constant, may be the means of very seriously embittering life. It is very obvious that the mind of Madame Guyon was not in harmony with her situation; and whether we consider the actual discordance as greater or less, the results could not well be otherwise than unfavorable. Other persons, it is true, with less experience of past domestic happiness, and with less talent and refinement, might, perhaps, have reconciled themselves to the situation in which she was placed, and have regarded it as in many respects a desirable one. Her husband was not without some good qualities. What his personal appearance was, we have no record. But whether it was owing to his traits as a man, or to the consideration naturally resulting from his great wealth, it is obvious, that he secured a degree of respect in the circle in which he moved. I think it is evident also, that he had a degree of affection for his wife, which, under favorable circumstances, might have increased, and have rendered their union happy. But his good feelings, which from time to time showed themselves, were perverted by the physical infirmities and sufferings to which he was subject, and by the influence of his mother, — a woman without education, and apparently possessed of but little liberality of natural feeling, — who retained in old age, and in the season of her wealth, those habits of labor and of penurious prudence, which were formed in her youth. Among other things which have a relation to the real position of Madame Guyon at this time, it is proper to notice, that the ill health of her husband, to which we have just alluded, rendered it necessary for him to keep in his employ a woman who attended upon him as a nurse, and who by her assiduity and skill, in seasons of sickness and suffering, gained a considerable control over his mind. This woman sympathized with the views and feelings of the mother-in-law, and contributed all in her power, to render the situation of the young wife, now in the bloom of youth and in the fulness of her fresh and warm affections, as unpleasant as possible.

4. We cannot but repeat, therefore, that Madame Guyon, as it seems to us, was both mentally and morally out of her true position. The individuals into whose immediate society she was introduced, and with whom she was constantly in contact, were characterized by a want of intellect and of scientific and literary culture, which was not compensated either by moral and religious excellences, or by the natural virtues of the heart. They not only did not appreciate her, but practically, if not always intentionally, they set themselves against her. They were not only blind to her merits, but rude to her sympathies and hopes, and negligent of her happiness. Certainly this was not the situation for a woman of great intellect and great sensibility; a woman who was subsequently admitted into the most distinguished circles in France; a woman who honorably sustained a controversy with the learning and genius of Bossuet, and who gave a strong and controlling impulse to the mind of Fenelon; a woman, whose moral and religious influence was such, that Louis the Fourteenth, in his solicitude for the extirpation of what he deemed heresy, thought it necessary to imprison her for years in the Bastile and the prison of Vincennes; who wrote poems in her imprisonment, which Cowper thought it no dishonor to translate; and who has exerted an influence which has never ceased to be felt, either in Europe or in America.

5. But there she was, and she felt and knew that her earthly hopes were blasted. But she did not then perceive what she afterwards knew, that God placed her there in his providence, as he made Joseph a slave in Egypt, "*for her good.*" God had formed her for himself. He loved her too

much to permit her to remain long in harmony with a world, which, in its vanity and its corruption, He could not love. He knew what was requisite in order to accomplish his own work; He knew under what providences the natural life would retain its ascendency, and the soul would be lost; and under what providences grace would be rendered effectual, and the soul would be saved. I have sometimes thought that God, who always respects man's moral freedom, carries on and completes the great work of his salvation, not only by grace, but by *position.* I use the word position here as nearly synonymous with external providences; and in laying down this proposition, I mean to say, it seems to me, although I would not speak with much confidence, to be a law of the divine action. Such are the relations between mind and place, that no man ever is what he is, independently of his situation. The mind has no power of acting in entire separation from the relations it sustains; it knows nothing where there are no objects to be known; loves nothing where there are no objects to be loved; does nothing where there is nothing to be done. Its powers of perception, its capabilities of affectionate or malevolent feeling, its resources of "volitional" or voluntary determination, develope their strength and their moral character in connection with the occasions which call them forth. Let any man read the Life of St. Augustine, particularly in connection with what he has himself said in his Confessions, or the Life of Francis Xavier, of Archbishop Leighton, of George Fox, of Baxter, of Wesley, of Brainerd, of Henry Martyn, — and then say, if different circumstances, (a situation, for instance, comparatively exempt from temptation and toil,) would have developed the same men, the same strength of purpose, the same faith in God, the same purity of life. This illustrates what we mean when we say that in the religious life we are the creatures, not only of grace, but of position, or more strictly and truly, of grace acting by position. If this doctrine be true, it throws light and beauty over the broad field of God's providences, and shows us why many have passed to glory through great tribulation. Tribulation was necessary to bring them, if not to the true life of God in the first instance, to that fulness and brightness of the inward life which they have experienced. So that those, who grow in grace by suffering, may do well to remember, that probably nothing but the seasons of trial which they have been called to pass through, would have fitted them for the reception and effectual action of that grace which is their consolation and their hope.

6. This was the view which Madame Guyon herself subsequently took of the subject. Viewed in the light of subsequent events, she saw that everything had been ordered in mercy. Addressing the person at whose suggestion and under whose direction she wrote her Life, she says, in relation to the trials and persecutions she endured, "I should have some difficulty in writing these things to you, which cannot be done without apparently giving offence to charity, if you had not required me to give a full account, without omitting anything. But there is one thing which I feel it a duty to request. And that is, that in these things, which thus took place, we must endeavor to *behold the hand of God*, and not look at them merely *on the side of the creature.* I would not give any undue or exaggerated idea of the defects of those persons by whom God had permitted me to be afflicted. My mother-in-law was not destitute of moral principles; my husband appeared to have some religious sentiments, and certainly was not addicted to open vices. It is necessary to look at everything *on the side of God*, who permitted these things only because they were connected with my salvation, and because he would not have me perish. Such was the strength of my natural pride, that

nothing but some dispensation of sorrow would have broken down my spirit, and turned me to God." And again she says, near the conclusion of the same chapter in her Life, "Thou hast ordered these things, oh my God, for my salvation! In goodness thou hast afflicted me. Enlightened by the result, I have since clearly seen, that these dealings of thy providence were necessary, in order to make me die to my vain and haughty nature. I had not power in myself to extirpate the evils within me. It was thy providence that subdued them." *

7. Her statement of some of her trials, I shall endeavor to give in a very abridged form, adjusting anew in some cases the arrangement of the facts where the narrative is confused, and giving the statement with more regard to the precise sentiment or idea, which she obviously means to convey, than to the specific form of expression. "The great fault of my step-mother, who was not without sense and merit, was, that she possessed an *ungovernable self-will.* This trait was extraordinary in her; it had never been surmounted in her youth, and had become so much a fixed, inflexible trait of her character, that she could scarcely live with anybody. Add to this, that from the beginning she had conceived a strong aversion to me, so much so, that she compelled me to do the most humiliating things. I was made the constant victim of her humors. Her great occupation was to thwart me continually; and she had the art and the cruelty to inspire my husband with the like unfavorable sentiments."

8. "For instance, in situations where it was proper to have some regard to rank or station in life, they would make persons who were far below me in that respect, take precedence over me, — a thing which was often very trying to my

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* La Vie de Madame Guyon, Pt. I. ch. 6.

feelings, — and especially so on account of my mother, who was very tenacious of what was due to honorable station in life, and who, when she heard of it from other persons, (for I was careful not to say anything about it myself,) rebuked me for want of spirit in not being able to maintain my rank. Another source of unhappiness was the disposition, on the part of my husband's family, [which resided a short distance out of the city of Paris,] to prevent my visiting my father's family, [which still continued to reside within the city limits.] My parents, whom I tenderly loved, complained that I came to see them so seldom, — little knowing the obstacles I had to encounter. I never went to see them, without having some bitter speeches to bear at my return. My step-mother, knowing how tenderly I felt on that point, found means to upbraid me in regard to my family, and spoke to me incessantly to the disadvantage of my father and mother."

9. "The place, which was assigned for my residence in my husband's house, was the room which properly belonged to my step-mother. I had no place into which I could retire as my own; and if it had been otherwise, I could not have remained alone in it for any length of time without offence. Kept thus continually in her presence, she took the opportunity to cast unkind reflections upon me before many persons who came to see us. And to complete my affliction, the person who was chosen to act as nurse to my husband in his sicknesses, and who at other times was expected to perform the offices of waiting-maid to myself, entered into all the plans of those who persecuted me. She kept me in sight like a governess, and treated me in a very singular manner, considering the relations actually existing between us. For the most part I bore with patience these evils, which I had no way to avoid; but sometimes I let some hasty answer escape me, which was to me a source of grievous crosses and violent reproaches for a long time together.

And when I was permitted to go out of doors, my absence added but little to my liberty. The footman had orders to give an account of everything I did. And what contributed to aggravate my afflictions, was the remembrance of my former situation, and of what I might have enjoyed under other circumstances. I could not easily forget the persons who had sought my affections, dwelling, by a contrasted operation of mind, on their agreeable manners, on the love they had for me, and on the dispositions they manifested,—so different from what I now had before me. All this made my present situation very gloomy, and my burthen intolerable."

10. "It was then I began to eat the bread of sorrow, and mingle my drink with tears. But my tears, which I could not forbear shedding, only furnished new occasion for attack and reproach. In regard to my husband, I ought perhaps to say, that it was not from any natural cruelty that he treated me as he did. He seems to have had a real affection for me, but being naturally hasty in his temper, his mother found the art of continually irritating him against me. Certain it is, that when I was sick, he was very much afflicted. Had it not been for the influence of his mother and of the waiting maid whom I have mentioned, we might have lived happily together."

11. "As it was, my condition was every way deplorable. My step-mother secured her object. My proud spirit broke under her system of coercion. Married to a person of rank and wealth, I found myself a slave in my own dwelling, rather than a free person. The treatment which I received so impaired the vivacity of my nature, that I became dumb, like 'the lamb that is shearing.' The expression of thought and feeling which was natural to me, faded from my countenance. Terror took possession of my mind. I lost all power of resistance. Under the rod of my despotic mistress,

I sat dumb and almost idiotic. Those who had heard of me, but had never seen me before, said one to another, 'Is this the person who sits thus silent like a piece of statuary, that was famed for such an abundance of wit?' In this situation, I looked in various directions for help; but I found no one with whom I could communicate my unhappiness; no one who might share my grief, and help me to bear it. To have made known my feelings and trials to my parents, would only have occasioned new crosses. I was alone and helpless in my grief."

CHAPTER VI.

Her trials result in a renewed disposition to seek God. Of the connection of providential events with the renewal of the heart. The birth of her first child and its effect upon her mind. Losses of property. Experience of severe sickness. Death of her paternal half-sister at Montargis, and of her mother at Paris. Result of these afflictions upon her mind. Renewed efforts of a religious nature. Her reading. Her interviews at her father's house with an exiled lady of great piety. Remarks. Her interviews with her cousin, M. De Toissi, Missionary to Cochin China. Her conversation with a Religious of the Order of St. Francis. Her conversion.

SUCH are the expressions which convey to us her sense of her trials. It was in this extremity that it occurred to her, (alas, that we learn this lesson so often from sorrows alone,) that, in the deficiency of all hope in creatures, there might be *hope and help in God.* It is true, that she had turned away from him; and having sought for solace where she had not found it, and where she ought not to have sought it, she felt ashamed to go back. But borne down by the burdens of a hidden providence, (a providence which she did not then love because she did not then understand it,) she yielded to the pressure that was upon her, and began to look to Him, in whom alone there is true assistance.

2. She had now been married about a year. A number of things occurred about this time, which are worthy of notice. They tend to illustrate what I have remarked, in the preceding chapter, on the operations of grace in connection

with the position in which we are placed in Providence. If it is not strictly true, that God saves us by his providences, — a remark which is sometimes made, — I think we may regard it as essentially true, that he saves us by his grace, dispensed and operating in connection with his providences. Providences test the disposition of the mind; they not only test it, but alter it and control it to some extent; and may be the means of placing it in a position the most favorable for the reception of inward divine teaching.

3. One circumstance, which was calculated to have a favorable effect upon the mind of Madame Guyon, at the time of which we are now speaking, was the birth of her first child. God was pleased to give her a son, to whom she gave the name of Armand Jaques Guyon. This event, appealing so strongly to family sympathies, was naturally calculated to interest and soften the feelings of those who had afflicted her. And we learn from what she has said on the subject, that this was the case. But this was not all. It brought with it such new relations; it opened such new views of employment and happiness, and imposed such increased responsibilities, that it could hardly fail to strengthen the renewed religious tendency, which had already begun to develope itself. Under the responsibility of a new life added to her own, she began to realize that, if it were possible for her not to need God for herself, she might need him for her child.

4. God, in his dispensations, mingled judgments and mercies together. Another circumstance, worthy of notice as occurring about this time, was the loss of a part of the property of the family. The revenues, accruing to the family from the Canal of Briare, which has already been mentioned, as having been completed by her husband's father, were very great. Louis Fourteenth, whose wars and domestic expenditures required large sums of money, took

from them a part of the income arising from that source. The family, besides their usual place of residence in the country, had a valuable house in the city of Paris, in connection with which also a considerable sum of money was lost at this time; but in what way, or for what reason, is not stated. If the birth of a son tended to conciliate and to make things easy, the loss of property had a contrary effect. Her step-mother, who seems to have been an avaricious woman, was inconsolable at these losses; which, in the perversity of her mind, she made the occasion of new injuries and insults to her daughter-in-law, saying with great bitterness, that the family had been free from afflictions till she came among them, and that all their troubles and losses came with her.

5. Another circumstance worthy of notice, a little later in time, and having some bearing upon her religious tendencies, was a severe sickness which she had. This was in the second year of her marriage. The business of her husband kept him much in Paris; and at the time to which we now refer, the situation of his affairs was such as to require his presence there constantly. After much opposition on the part of her mother-in-law, she obtained her consent to leave their residence, which was a short distance out of the city, and to go for a time and reside there with him. But it is worthy of remark, that she did not obtain this consent, which could not well be withholden without an obvious violation of her rights, until she had called in the aid of her father, who insisted upon it. She went to the Hotel de Longueville, where her husband staid. She was received with every demonstration of kindness from Madame de Longueville, and from the inmates of the house; and there were many things, notwithstanding the generally unpleasant position of her domestic relations, which tended to render her residence in the city agreeable. While at the Hotel de Longueville she fell

sick, and was reduced to great extremity. The prospect was, that she would soon die ; and so far as the world was concerned, she felt that it had lost, in a great degree, its attractions, and she was willing to go. The priest who attended her, mistaking a spirit of deadness to the world, originating in part from her inability to enjoy it, for a true spirit of acquiescence in God's dispensations, thought well of her state. She seemed to him to be truly religious. But this was not her own opinion. She had merely begun to turn her eye, as it were, in the right direction. "My sins were too present to my mind," she says, "and too painful to my heart, to permit me to indulge in a favorable opinion as to my acceptance with God. This sickness was of great benefit to me. Besides teaching me patience under violent pains, it served to give me newer and more correct views of the emptiness of worldly things. It had the tendency to detach me in some degree from self, and gave me new courage to suffer with more resignation than I had ever done."

6. But this was not all. Death had begun to make inroads in her family circle. Her paternal half-sister, who resided at the Ursuline Convent in Montargis, died, she informs us, two months before her marriage. To this sister, to whom she was exceedingly attached, she makes repeated references. Perhaps we know too little of her to speak with entire confidence. But she seems to have been a woman gentle in spirit and strong in faith, who lived in the world as those who are not of the world; and who, we may naturally suppose, died in the beauty and simplicity of Christian peace. The loss of a sister, so deservedly esteemed and loved by Madame Guyon, could not possibly be experienced without making the earth less dear, and heaven more precious. And at the time of which we are now speaking, the second year of her marriage and the eighteenth year of her age, she experienced the separation of another strong tie to

earth, by the loss of her mother. "My mother departed this life," she remarks, "in great tranquillity of spirit, having, besides other virtues, been in particular very charitable to the poor. God, who seems to have regarded with favor her benevolent disposition, was pleased to reward her, even in this life, with such a spirit of resignation, that, though she was but twenty-four hours sick, she was made perfectly easy about everything that was near and dear to her in this world."

7. It is easy to see, in the light of these various dispensations, that God, who builds his bow of promise in the cloud, had marked her for his own. He had followed her long, and warned her often; but He did not give up the pursuit. He stopped her pathway to the world; but He left it open to heaven. He drew around her the cords of His providence closely, that she might be separated, in heart and in life, from those unsatisfying objects, which, in her early days, presented to her so many attractions. She herself, as we have already had occasion to notice, was subsequently led to view everything in this manner. It was God who was present in all these events; it was God who, through an instrumentality of his own selection, was laying his hand painfully but effectually upon the idols which she had inwardly cherished, sometimes trying her by mercies, where mercy might be supposed to affect her heart, but still more frequently and effectually by the sterner discipline of outward disappointment and of inward anguish.

8. It was not in vain, that He who understands the nature of the human heart, and the difficulty of subjecting it, thus adjusted every thing in great wisdom, as well as in real kindness. The trials which He had sent, were among those which work out "the peaceable fruits of righteousness." It was the result of these various providences, afflicting as they generally were, that she was led to the determination,

(a determination which from this time never was abandoned,) *once more to seek God.* She had sought him before, but she had not found him. But, in giving up the search and in turning from God to the world, she had found that which gave no satisfaction. Bitterly had she learned, that, if there is not rest in God, there is rest nowhere. Again, therefore, she formed the religious resolve,—a resolve which God enabled her not only to form, but to keep. Her feelings at this time seem to be well expressed in a well known religious hymn, which is designed to describe the state of a sinner, who has seen the fallacy and the unsatisfying nature of all situations and of all hopes out of Christ.

"Perhaps he will admit my plea;
Perhaps will hear my prayer;
But if I perish, I will pray,
And perish only there.

"I can but perish if I go;
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away, I know
I must forever die."

9. Fully established in her determination to seek God, in all time to come, as her chief good, she adopted those measures which seemed to her to have a connection with that great object. Undoubtedly they had. They show her sense of need and her deep sincerity; but they indicate also how difficult it is for the natural heart, especially under certain systems of religious belief and practice, to detach itself from its own methods and its own supposed merits, and in true simplicity of spirit to follow him who is "*the way, the truth, and the life.*" It is evident, however, although they were in some sense only preparatory, that they had a connection with the great lesson which she was destined ultimately to learn. Among other things which seemed to be necessary

in her present state, she gives us to understand that she ceased to give that attention to her outward appearance which she had done formerly. Fearful that she might either excite or increase emotions of vanity, she diminished very much the time which she had formerly occupied in adjusting and contemplating her person at the mirror. In addition to this improvement of a personal nature, she commenced doing something for the religious benefit of the servants of the family. She likewise, as a part of her renewed system of effort, began a process of inward examination, often performing it very strictly, writing down her faults from week to week, and comparing the record at different periods, in order to see whether she had corrected them, and to what extent. The sabbath, it is hardly necessary to add, was a day strictly observed, and the place of worship was not only regularly visited, but was attended with some beneficial results. She made such progress in certain respects, that she began to see and to appreciate, much more correctly than at any former period, the defects of her character and life, and to feel sentiments of sincere compunction. She laid aside all such reading as was incompatible with her present position, and confined her attention chiefly to the most devout works. One of these books, which, notwithstanding its Catholic origin, is much esteemed among Protestants, was the celebrated *Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas a Kempis; a work which is widely circulated and read among devout people of all denominations of Christians. Under a simple and unpretending exterior, corresponding in this respect, as we may well suppose, with the humble spirit of its author, whoever he may have been, it contains the highest principles of Christian experience. Some of the works of Francis de Sales also, which she mentions as having read at an early period of her life, were consulted by her at this time with great interest.

10. God, who adjusts the means to the end to be accomplished, and who is not easily wearied out in His benevolence, was pleased to add other instrumentalities. During her visit to the city of Paris, which has just now been referred to, and at other times, she had opportunities, more or less frequently, of being at her father's house. After the death of her mother, her respect and affection for her father seemed especially to require it. She there became acquainted with a lady, whom she speaks of as being an *Exile,*—very possibly some one of those persons, who with the Queen of England and others, had been driven away from England by the civil wars in that country, which resulted in the dethronement and death of Charles First. She intimates that this exiled lady, whose name is not given, came to her father's house in a state of destitution; and says expressly, that he offered her an apartment in it, which she accepted and staid there for a long time. This destitute woman, instructed in the vanities of the world by the trials she had experienced, had sought and had found the consolations of religion. She was one of those, that, in loving God, "worship him in spirit and in truth." Her gratitude to M. De La Mothe, who had received and sheltered her in her misfortunes, was naturally shown in acts of kindness to his daughter, Madame Guyon. And it is but reasonable to suppose that these favorable dispositions were increased by what she observed of her talents, her beauty, and her sorrows; and still more by what she noticed of her sincere and earnest desire to know more, and experience more, of the things of religion.

11. Madame Guyon eagerly embraced the opportunity which was thus afforded her of religious conversation; and from this pious friend who was thus raised up by Providence to instruct her, she seems to have received the first distinct intimations, that she was erroneously

seeking religion *by a system of works without faith.* Among other things, this devout lady remarked to her, in connection with what she had observed of her various exterior works of charity, that she had the virtues of "*an active life,*" that is to say, the virtues of outward activity, of outward doing, but that she had not the "truth and simplicity of the life within." In other words, that her trust was in herself rather than in God, although she might not be fully aware of it. But Madame Guyon, in recurring to this period afterwards, says significantly, "*My time had not yet come; I did not understand her.* Living in my presence in the Christian spirit, she served me more by her *example* than by her words. God was in her life. I could not help observing on her *countenance,* reflecting as it did the inward spirit, something which indicated a great enjoyment of God's presence. I thought it an object to try to be like her outwardly, — to exhibit that exterior aspect of divine resignation and peace, which is characteristic of true inward piety. I made much effort, but it was all to little purpose. I wanted to obtain, by efforts made in my own strength, that which could be obtained only by ceasing from all such efforts, and trusting wholly in God."

12. In narrating the various providential dispensations and instrumentalities, which resulted in the spiritual renovation of Madame Guyon, we cannot well avoid noticing how much it costs to bring a soul to the knowledge of God. This recital of instrumentalities and influences does not, as I suppose, present anything peculiarly new; — anything which does not occur in many other cases. The human mind is so wedded to its natural perverseness, that, generally speaking, it is not brought into harmony with God at once. Even those conversions, which appear to be especially prompt and sudden, have in many cases been preceded by a long pre-

paratory training, which is not the less real, because it has been unseen and unknown. Generally speaking, we see efforts frequently renewed, resolves made and resolves broken, alternations of penitential tears and of worldly joys, advice and warning received to-day and rejected to-morrow, and very frequently a long series of disappointments and sorrows, before the mind is so humbled and instructed, as to renounce its earthly hopes, and to possess all things in God by becoming nothing in itself. But this state of things, which so frequently happens, and which is really so afflicting, teaches us the lesson of patience and of hope. Tears may have been wiped away, and resolutions may have been broken; and yet those tears, which seemed to have been in vain, and those resolutions which seemed to have been worse than in vain, may have been important and even indispensable links in the chain of providential occurrences. We repeat, therefore, that conversions long delayed, although they are calculated to try and purify our patience, ought not to extinguish our hope. "In due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

13. We proceed to say then, that another individual, besides the lady whose conversation and influence have just now been stated, had a share in that series of providences, which God saw to be necessary, in order to turn the mind of Madame Guyon from the world to himself. This was a pious person, who has already been mentioned, M. De Toissi, the nephew of M. De La Mothe. He had been to Cochin China, as a sharer in the religious enterprises which were carried on there, and after an absence of about four years, had returned on business connected with the Mission with which he was associated. He visited the house of M. De La Mothe, where his cousin, Madame Guyon, was exceedingly glad to see him. She knew his character. She remembered what was said of his conversation and his appearance, when he

visited her father's house some years before, just before his departure for the East. And, in her present state of mind, groping about as she was in solitude and desolation of spirit, she eagerly sought interviews and conversations with pious persons. This pious cousin, impelled by natural affection as well as by a regard for the interests of religion, did all that he could to encourage her in her search after God. There were other things which gave him an increased interest in the case, such as her personal accomplishments, her great talents, the wealth of her family, her position in society, and her comparative youth, — circumstances, which, in that age of worldly splendor and enjoyment, were particularly adverse to the humble and pure spirit of religion. And it was not easy for one to see the possessor of them seeking religion, with a full determination to be satisfied with nothing else, without feeling a deep interest in the result, — much more so, probably, than would be felt in ordinary cases. Madame Guyon very freely and ingenuously stated her views of her inward state to her cousin, — the faults of her character, her inward sense of her alienation from God, the efforts she had made, and the discouragements she had met with. He expressed the deepest interest in her case. He prayed for her. He gave such advice as he was able. With earnest exhortations he cheered her onward, not doubting that God's wisdom and goodness would bring all well in the end.

14. Her interviews with this good man had an encouraging effect. His spiritual habits, as well as his conversation, affected her. Among other things she gives us to understand, that he was in a state of inward and continual communion with God; that state of mind, probably, which, in accordance with the nomenclature of the higher experimental writers, she variously denominates, in her religious works, as the state of "Recollection," or of "Recollection in God;"

and which I think may be properly denominated the Prayer of Recollection. This state of continual prayer affected her much, although she was unable at that time, as she expressly admits, to understand its nature. She also noticed, with interest and profit, the conversation which passed between him and the exiled lady resident at her father's, who has already been mentioned. As is the case with all truly religious people, they seemed to understand each others' hearts. "They conversed together," she says, "in a *spiritual language*." They had that to speak of, which souls unconverted can never know, — a Saviour "who was no longer as a root sprung out of the dry ground," sins forgiven, and joy and peace in believing.

15. The example and the exhortations of her cousin, De Toissi,* could not fail to make a deep impression. Many were the tears she shed when he departed. She renewed her solemn resolutions. She endeavored to imitate him in his state of continual prayer, by offering up to God ejaculations, either silent or spoken, moment by moment. On the system of making resolutions and of mere human effort, she seems to have done all that she could do. But still she did not *understand;* a cloud hung over one of the brightest intellects when left to itself, — so perplexing to human wisdom, and so adverse to the natural heart is the way of forgiveness and justification *by faith alone.* Those know it who experience it, and those only; but *her* hour had not yet come. More than a year had passed in this state of mind, and with such efforts, — but apparently in vain. With all these appliances which have been mentioned, with afflictions on the one hand to separate her from earthly objects, and

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* Madame Guyon (*La Vie*, Pt. 1, chap. iv.) says, there is some account of this individual in the work entitled *Relation des Missions Etrangéres*, under the name DE CHAMESSON.

with encouragements on the other to allure her to heaven, she still seems to have remained without God and without hope in the world. So much does it cost, in a fallen world like this, to detach a soul from its bondage and to bring it to God! God has not only spread the feast, in the salvation which he has offered through his Son, but, by means of ministers, both providential and personal, he goes out into the highways, and compels them to come in.

16. God was pleased to send one more messenger. "Oh, my Father!" says Madame Guyon, in connection with the incidents we are about to relate, "it seems to me sometimes, as if Thou didst forget every other being, in order to think only of my faithless and ungrateful heart." There was a devout man who belonged to the Religious Order of St. Francis. His name is not given, nor will it now probably ever be known on earth. This man, deeply impressed with religious sentiments, spent five years in solitude, for the express purpose of spiritual renovation, and of communion with God. With a heart subdued to the world's attractions, and yet inflamed for the world's good, he went out into the field of labor. He thought that God called him to labor for the conversion of a person of some distinction, who lived in the vicinity of M. De La Mothe. But his labors there proved fruitless, — or rather they resulted only in the trial of his own faith and patience. The humble Franciscan, revolving in his mind where he should next go and announce the divine message, was led by the inward monitor, speaking in connection with the indications of providence, to go to the house of M. De La Mothe, with whom he seems to have had some acquaintance in former times. M. De La Mothe, a man in whom the religious tendency was strong, was exceedingly glad to see him, and to receive his instructions, especially as he was then out of health, and had not much expectation of living long. His daughter,

Madame Guyon, who was desirous of rendering him every assistance in his increasing infirmities, was then at her father's house, although her own health was very infirm. Her father was not ignorant either of her outward or inward trials. She had conversed with him with entire frankness on her religious state. She related to him the exercises of her mind, her dissatisfaction with her present spiritual condition, and her earnest desire to avail herself of every favorable opportunity to receive religious instruction. Her father, influenced by the representations she made, as well as by his high sense of the piety and religious wisdom of the Franciscan who had visited him, not only advised but strongly urged her to consult with him.

17. Attended by a kinswoman, as seemed to be proper under the existing circumstances, she visited the room of the Franciscan, and stated to him her conviction of her need of religion, and the often-repeated and long-continued efforts she had made without effect. When she had done speaking, the Franciscan remained silent for some time, in inward meditation and prayer. He at length said: "*Your efforts have been unsuccessful, Madame, because you have sought without, what you can only find within. Accustom yourself to seek God in your heart, and you will not fail to find him.*"

18. It is very probable, that she had heard a similar sentiment before; but if it were so, it came to her as religious truth always does come to those in their natural state, who are permitted to hear, before grace has enabled them to understand. But now the hour of God's providence and of special mercy had arrived. Clearly and strongly did the divine Spirit apply a truth which otherwise would have fallen useless to the ground. "Your efforts have been unsuccessful, Madame, because you have sought *without* what you can only find *within*. Accustom yourself to seek God in your heart, and you will not fail to find him." These few

words, somewhat singular in the mode of expression as they are, obviously convey the great principle, that religion does not and cannot consist in outward working, — in a mere round of ceremonial duties, — in anything which comes exclusively under the denomination of an external action. But, on the contrary, it is inward in the sense of having its seat in the heart's affections, and in accordance with the great scriptural doctrine, that the "*just shall live by faith.*" From the moment that Madame Guyon heard these words, she was enabled to see the error she had committed, — that of endeavoring to obtain God by a system of outward operations, — by the mercenary purchase of formal services, rather than by the natural and divine attraction of accordant sympathies. Speculatively, there may be a God objective, a God outward, a God recognized by the intellect as a great and majestic being living in the distance. And in certain respects this is a view of God which is not at variance with the truth. But still God can never be known to us as *our* God, he can never be brought into harmony with *our* nature, except as a God *inward*, a God received by faith and made one with us by love, and having his home in the sanctified temple of the heart. "*Believe* in the Lord your God; so shall ye be established. *Believe* his prophets; so shall ye prosper." *

19. It may be interesting to hear Madame Guyon state the effect of this conversation in her own words. "Having said these words," she says, "the Franciscan left me. They were to me like the stroke of a dart, which pierced my heart asunder. I felt at this instant deeply wounded with the love of God; — a wound so delightful, that I desired it never might be healed. These words brought into my heart what I had been seeking so many years; or rather they made me

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* 2 Chron. xx. 20.

discover what was there, and which I did not enjoy for want of knowing it. Oh my Lord! thou wast in my heart, and demanded only the turning of my mind inward, to make me feel thy presence. Oh, infinite Goodness! Thou wast so near, and I ran hither and thither seeking thee, and yet found thee not. My life was a burden to me, and my happiness was within myself. I was poor in the midst of riches, and ready to perish with hunger near a table plentifully spread and a continual feast. Oh Beauty, ancient and new! Why have I known thee so late? Alas, I sought thee where thou wast not, and did not seek thee where thou wast! It was for want of understanding these words of thy Gospel: '*The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo! here, or lo! there; for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*' This I now experienced, since thou didst become my King, and my heart thy kingdom, where thou dost reign a Sovereign, and dost all thy will.

20. "I told this good man, that I did not know what he had done to me; that my heart was quite changed; that God was there; for from that moment he had given me an experience of his presence in my soul,— not merely as an object intellectually perceived by any application of mind, but as a thing really possessed after the sweetest manner. I experienced those words in the Canticles: '*Thy name is as precious ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love thee.*' For I felt in my soul an unction, which, as a salutary perfume, healed in a moment all my wounds. I slept not all that night, because thy love, oh my God! flowed in me like delicious oil, and burned as a fire which was going to destroy all that was left of self in an instant. I was all on a sudden so altered, that I was hardly to be known either by myself or others. I found no more those troublesome faults, or that reluctance to duty, which formerly characterized

me. They all disappeared, as being consumed like chaff in a great fire.

21. "I now became desirous that the instrument hereof might become my Director,* in preference to any other. This good father, however, could not readily resolve to charge himself with my conduct, though he saw so surprising a change effected by the hand of God. Several reasons induced him to excuse himself: first my person, then my youth, for I was only twenty years of age; and lastly, a promise he had made to God, from a distrust of himself, never to take upon himself the direction of any of our sex, unless God, by some particular providence, should charge him therewith. Upon my earnest and repeated request to him to become my Director, he said he would pray to God thereupon, and bade me do so too. As he was at prayer, it was said to him, 'Fear not that charge; she is my spouse.' This, when I heard it, affected me greatly. 'What! (said I to myself,) a frightful monster of iniquity, who have done so much to offend my God, in abusing his favors, and requiting them with ingratitude, — and now, thus to be declared his spouse!' After this he consented to my request.

22. "Nothing was more easy to me now than to practise prayer. Hours passed away like moments, while I could hardly do anything else but pray. The fervency of my love allowed me no intermission. It was a prayer of re-

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* Director. — It is perhaps hardly necessary to say to the reader, that it is customary for persons in the Romish church to choose some ecclesiastic for a Director or spiritual guide. The office of Director and the office of Confessor, sometimes exist in the same person, and the terms Director, and Confessor, appear in some instances to be used as synonymous with each other. Strictly speaking, however, it is not the business of the Director to hear confessions, but simply to give religious counsel, in those various circumstances in which Christians, especially in the beginning of the religious life, are found to need it.

joicing and of possession, wherein the taste of God was so great, so pure, unblended and uninterrupted, that it drew and absorbed the powers of the soul into a profound recollection, a state of confiding and affectionate rest in God, existing without intellectual effort. For I had now no sight but of Jesus Christ alone. All else was excluded, in order to love with greater purity and energy, without any motives or reasons for loving which were of a selfish nature."*

23. Such are the expressions, in which she speaks of the remarkable change which thus passed upon her spirit, — an event in her life which opened new views, originated new feelings, instituted new relations, and gave new strength. Too important in itself and its relations to be forgotten under any circumstances, we find her often recurring to it with those confiding, affectionate and grateful sentiments, which it was naturally calculated to inspire. One of her religious poems, which Cowper has translated, expresses well the feelings which we may suppose to have existed in her at this time.

LOVE AND GRATITUDE.

"All are indebted much to Thee,
But I far more than all;
From many a deadly snare set free,
And raised from many a fall.
Overwhelm me, from above,
Daily with thy boundless love.

What bonds of gratitude I feel,
No language can declare;
Beneath the oppressive weight I reel,
'T is more than I can bear;
When shall I that blessing prove,
To return Thee love for love?

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* Life of Madame Guyon, Pt. 1, chap. viii. Anonymous Translation.

Spirit of Charity! Dispense
  Thy grace to every heart;
Expel all other spirits thence;
  Drive self from every part.
Charity divine! Draw nigh;
Break the chains in which we lie.

All selfish souls, whate'er they feign,
  Have still a slavish lot;
They boast of liberty in vain,
  Of love, and feel it not.
He, whose bosom glows with thee,
He, and he alone, is free.

Oh blessedness, all bliss above,
  When thy pure fires prevail!
LOVE* *only teaches what is love;*
  All other lessons fail;
We learn its name, but not its powers,
Experience only makes it ours."

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* God is *Love*, 1st Epis. John, iv. 8.

CHAPTER VII.

Remarks on intellectual experience, in distinction from that of the heart. Of that form of experience which may be termed apparitional. Of that form of experience which is characterized by joy. Her experience characterized especially by the subjection of the will. Of the course to be pursued in translating from the writings of Madame Guyon. Her remarks on the union of the human with the divine will. Her remarks on faith. Conversation with a Franciscan. Immersion of her soul in God, and her contemplation of all things in him.

Madame Guyon, in her Autobiography, makes a number of practical remarks on the nature of her religious experience at this time. Recognizing a distinction, which is important in the analysis of inward experience, she regarded the change which she underwent at this period, as not merely an intellectual illumination, but as truly a change of the *heart*. It is true, undoubtedly, that she had received new light. She had been led to see more distinctly than ever before the extreme perversity and blindness of the natural mind. She had now a clearer perception both of what God is, and of what he requires; and especially of the way of forgiveness and salvation by faith in Christ alone. But perception is not love. The righting of the understanding is not necessarily identical with the rectification of the sensibilities. The understanding, enlightened of God, will sometimes dictate what the heart, in its opposition to God, will be slow to follow. This was not her case. Her understanding was not only enlightened, but her heart was renewed.

2. And, in connection with these remarks, it may be proper to add here, that there is a sort of inward experience, which is not only intellectual, but which, to indicate to what part of the intellect it belongs, may be described more specifically as "apparitional." It is generally found among uneducated persons, but not exclusively; and it is so frequent in its occurrence, as well as important in its results and relations, as to authorize some notice. It consists, for the most part, in sights seen and sounds heard, not excluding anything which is addressed to the intellect through the *external senses;* and can justly be regarded as especially liable to illusion. It is here, perhaps, more than anywhere else, although all such experience may be accounted for to a considerable extent on natural principles, that Satan "transforms himself into an angel of light." So far as this form of experience is concerned, the kingdom of God was erected within her "*without observation.*" No sound was heard but that of the "still small voice," which speaks inwardly and effectually. There was no dream, no vision, no audible message. Her change was characterized, not by things seen, but by operations experienced; not by revelations imparted from without, and known only as existing without, but by affections inspired by the Holy Ghost from within, and constituting, from the time of their origin, a part of the inward consciousness.

3. Another remark may properly be made, in connection with what she has said on the subject. It is very obvious from her statements, that, in her first experience of the new life, she had great joy. Joy was a marked characteristic of it. But taught by the great inward Teacher, she was enabled to perceive from the first, that it would not be safe for her to estimate either the reality or the degree of her reli-

gion by the amount of her happiness. It is true there is not only such a thing as joy, but such a thing as *religious* joy, or joy attendant on religion, and which, therefore, may properly be described, in the language of the Scriptures, as "joy in the Holy Ghost." But this is a very different thing from saying, that joy and religion are the same thing. Joy is not only not religion, but it does not always arise from religious causes. The grounds or causes of its origin are numerous, and sometimes very diverse. A new speculative truth, new views which are at variance with the truth, or even the pleasant intimations of a dream or vision, whether more or less remarkable, (to say nothing of physical causes, and of providential causes,—causes connected with the state of our health and with our situation in life,) may be followed by a pleasurable excitement of the emotional part of our nature, which may be mistaken for true religion. Certain it is, however, that no joys can be regarded as really of a religious nature and as involving the fact of religion, which are not attended with repentance for sin and faith in Jesus Christ, with the renovation of the desires and with the subjection of the will. The views of Madame Guyon on this subject were distinct and decided. She took the Saviour for her example, who was not the less a religious man, because he was a man of "sorrows and acquainted with grief." She did not seek joy, but God. God *first*, and what God sees fit to give, afterwards. She believed and knew, (so far as she thought it necessary to give attention to the subject of her own personal enjoyments at all,) if she gave herself to God wholly, without reserve, God would not be slow to take care of her happiness.

4. The leading and decisive characteristic of her religious experience, in distinction from those forms of experience which have been mentioned, was, as she informs us, the subjection and loss of her own will in its union with the Divine

will. It may be expressed in a single term,— *union.* "As Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be ONE in us." On this subject she makes a number of remarks, which may properly be introduced here. But in doing this, I think it necessary to make a few preliminary statements. Madame Guyon's literary education, although it compared well with that of other French ladies at that time, was, in some respects, defective. The institutions for young ladies, not excluding the celebrated Seminary of St. Cyr, established a few years after, did not profess to give, and were not able to give, that thorough mental training which was had in the French colleges and universities. And it is hardly necessary to say, that the greatest natural ability will not necessarily compensate for defects in education. Her style of writing is eloquent and impressive in a high degree, but a critical eye will discover in it deficiencies, which are to be ascribed in part to the cause which has just been intimated. In translating her statements, therefore, it is oftentimes necessary to analyze her thoughts and to re-arrange them in their logical order, in order to present them to the mind of the reader in the same position, and with the same import they possessed in her own mind. It is to be noticed, also, that the theological and experimental terms which she uses, sometimes have a specific meaning, not unknown perhaps in some of the mystic writers, but which can certainly be ascertained only by an intimate knowledge of her own experience, character, and writings. Take, as an illustration of this remark, the word "*Puissances*," which is literally rendered by the English word, *Powers.* But it is very evident, from a careful examination of her writings, that the latter term gives only an indefinite and imperfect idea of the sense which she attaches to the original term. She uses it in its mental application; meaning the *mental* powers, but not all of them. She distinguishes between the will, *Volonté*, the Understanding, *Entendement*, and the *Puissances;* meaning generally by the *latter* term, the propensive and affectional part of our nature, not excluding the appetites; what we sometimes denominate by the single expression, the natural sensibilities. It would not be sufficient, therefore, merely to translate her words by rendering them with the words and methods of expression that formally correspond to them in our own language. A translation of words is not necessarily a translation of ideas. It is necessary, in the first place, to ascertain what she meant, and then to embody her ideas, when they are ascertained, in such a mode of expression, — whether it corresponds verbally and literally to the original form of expression or not, — as will convey to the English reader just that meaning which she herself would have conveyed, if she had used the English language as an instrument, and had communicated with the Anglo-Saxon mind. Add to this, her statements on the same subject are often fragmentary; that is to say, are broken in parts, uttered in various and remote places of her works, and accompanied more or less with digressions and repetitions. It has been a part of my labor to combine them together, and to give them in the simplest form, without repetitions. So that what I give as a translation is, in some cases, in order to express the true spirit or mind of Madame Guyon, of the nature of an *interpreted* translation, a translation of the spirit rather than of the letter. So elevated is her religious experience, and so peculiar is her religious dialect, added to the other circumstances which have been alluded to, that a *true* translation of what she *was* and of what she *meant*, can be made in no other way. And not only that, a translation, made on any other principles, would, in my opinion, be dangerous to inexperienced readers, by suggesting ideas, which were never meant to be conveyed, and thus leading into errors both of doctrine and practice.

5. With these remarks, we proceed to give some of her views, and shall introduce others hereafter, as occasion may present itself. "The union between the soul and God may exist in various respects. There may be a union of the human and the divine perceptions. There may be a union of the desires and affections to some extent and in various particulars. But the most perfect union, that which includes whatever is most important in the others, is the union of the human and the divine will. A union of the affections, independently of that of the will, if we can suppose such a thing, must necessarily be imperfect. When the will, which sustains a preëminent and controlling relation, is in the state of entire union with God, it necessarily brings the whole soul into subjection; it implies necessarily the extinction of any selfish action, and brings the mind into harmony with itself, and into harmony with everything else. From that moment, our powers cease to act from any private or selfish regards. They are annihilated to *self*, and act only in reference to God. Nor do they act in reference to God in their own way and from their own impulse; but move as they are moved upon, being gradually detached from every motion of their own.

6. "In such a soul the principle of faith is very strong; so much so as to require nothing of the nature of visions and revelations to sustain it, and to be equally independent of that false support which is derived from human reasonings. That faith which annihilates all our powers, or rather the action of all our powers, in regard to *self*, making the principle of holy love predominant, and bringing the human will into subjection to the divine, is a light in the soul, which is necessarily inconsistent with, and which extinguishes every other light. That is to say, if we go by any other light, the light of mere human reason, the guidance of inward visions and voices, or of strong emotions, which may be called the

lights of sense, or by any other light whatever, distinct and separate from that of faith, of course we do not go by the light of faith. In the presence of the light of faith, every other light necessarily grows dim and passes away, as the light of the moon and stars gradually passes away, and is extinguished in the broader and purer illumination of the rising sun. This light now arose in my heart. Believing with this faith, the fountains of the heart were opened, and I loved God with a strength of love corresponding to the strength of faith. Love existed in the soul; and throwing its influence around every other principle of action, constituted, as it were, the soul's dwelling place. God was there. According to the words of St. John, '*He, that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God. God is love.*'"

7. When at a certain time the pious Franciscan,* who had been under God the instrument of her conversion, and who now, in accordance with the practice of the church to which she belonged, acted as her spiritual Director, questioned her in relation to her feelings towards God, she answered: "I love God far more than the most affectionate lover among men loves the object of his earthly attachment. I make this statement as an illustration, because it is not easy to convey my meaning in any other way. But this comparison, if it furnishes an approximation to the truth, fails to discover the truth itself. It is merely an illustration, which may enable one imperfectly to conceive the strength of that love which exists in me, but is not, and cannot be, a true measurement of it."

8. "This love of God," she adds, "occupied my heart so constantly and strongly, that it was very difficult for me to

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* The Franciscans are a religious Order in the Roman Catholic Church, founded, near the commencement of the thirteenth century, by St. Francis, of Assisium, in Italy

think of anything else. Nothing else seemed worthy of my attention. So much was my soul absorbed in God, that my eyes and ears seemed to close of themselves to outward objects, and to leave the soul under the exclusive influence of the inward attraction. My lips also were closed. Not unfrequently vocal prayer, that form of it which deals in particulars, ceased to utter itself, because my mind could not so far detach itself from this one great object as to consider anything else. When the good Father, the Franciscan, preached at the Magdalen Church, at which I attended, notwithstanding the importance and interest which attached to his religious addresses, I found it difficult for me, and almost impossible, to retain any definite idea of what he said. He preached there on three successive occasions about this time; and the result was always the same. I found that Thy truth, O my God, springing from the original source, as if Thy divine and eternal voice were speaking truly, yet inaudibly in the soul, made its impression on my heart, and there had its effect, without the mediation of words.

9. "This immersion in God absorbed all things; that is to say, seemed to place all things in a new position relatively to God. Formerly I had contemplated things as dissociated from God; but now I beheld all things in the Divine Union. [I could no more separate holy creatures from God, regarded as the source of their holiness, than I could consider the sun's rays as existing distinct from the sun itself, and living and shining by virtue of their own power of life.] This was true of the greatest saints. I could not see the saints, Peter, and Paul, and the Virgin Mary, and others, as separate from God, but as being all that they are, from Him and in Him, in oneness. I could not behold them out of God; but I beheld them all in Him."

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the very marked and decisive nature of her conversion. Ceases to conform to the world in her diversions and modes of dress. Birth of her second son. Her views of providence in connection with her position in life. Of the discharge of her duty to her family and to others. Her great kindness and charity to the poor. Her efforts for the preservation of persons of her own sex. Her labors for the conversion of souls. Conversation with a lady of rank. Happy results. Domestic trials. Unkindness of her step-mother and of her maid-servant. Partial alienation of her husband's affections. Conduct of her eldest son. Her solitary state.

MADAME GUYON dates this great change as taking place on Magdalen's day, as it is termed in the Catholic church,—the 22d of July, 1668.* She was then a little more than twenty years of age.

2. It is hardly necessary to say, that the change which persons experience in their transition from the life of nature to the life of God in the soul, are very different, in their commencement, in different persons, being much more marked in some cases than in others. In the case of Madame Guyon, although slowly progressive in its preparatory steps, it seems to have been very decisive and marked at the time of its actually taking place. It was obviously a great crisis in her moral and religious being,—one in which the pride and obstinacy of the natural heart were broken

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* La Vie de Madame Guyon, Pt. I. chap. 10, § 5.

down, and in which, for the first time, she became truly willing to receive Christ alone as her hope of salvation.

3. A gospel change implies the existence of a new nature. A nature which has life in it; and which, having the principle of life in itself, puts forth the acts of life. And it is thus that the fact, both of its existence and of its character, is verified. The true life always shows itself outwardly, in its appropriate time and way. "*By their fruits*," says the Savior, "*ye shall know them.*" No other evidence will compensate, or ought to compensate for the absence of this. This evidence Madame Guyon gave. From the moment that she gave herself to the Lord to be his, in the inner spirit as well as the outward action, and in the action corresponding to the spirit, the language of her heart, like that of the Apostle Paul was, "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*"

4. "I bade farewell forever," she says, "to assemblies which I had visited, to plays and diversions, to dancing, to unprofitable walks, and to parties of pleasure. The amusements and pleasures which are so much prized and esteemed by the world, now appeared to me dull and insipid,— so much so, that I wondered how I ever could have enjoyed them." She adds the remark, that for two years previously she had left off the curling of her hair,— a very general and favorite practice at that time, and which,— if we may believe the Marquis De Dangeau,* although his statements strictly apply to a somewhat later period,— was sometimes carried to an injurious and unseemly extent. And in connection with doing this she expresses an opinion,— which others, who wish to honor the Saviour in a Christian life, might do well to remember,— that she abandoned a practice, which, in the judgment of a correct taste, does not in reality contribute to the attractions of personal appearance; and the abandonment of

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* Dangeau's Memoirs of the Court of France.

which, therefore, if rightly considered, cannot be supposed to involve any great personal sacrifice. Without going into particulars, it may perhaps be sufficient to say, that from this time it became her object, in her dress, in her modes of living, and in her personal habits generally, as well as in her interior dispositions, to conform to the requisitions of the Inward Monitor, the Comforter and Guide of holy souls, who now began to speak in her heart.

5. Sustaining the relations of a wife, a mother, and a daughter, and seeing now more clearly into the ways and requisitions of Providence, she endeavored, from higher motives and in a better manner than ever before, to discharge the duties which she owed to her father, her husband, and her children. I speak of her duties to her *children*, because, previously to the time of which we are now speaking, God had been pleased to give her another son. The birth of her first son, — whom she frequently names as being made, through the perverting influence of her step-mother, a son of trial and sorrow, — has already been mentioned. The second son, who gave better promise both for himself and others, was born in 1667. We shall have occasion to recur to him again, although we have scarcely anything recorded of him, except the few painful incidents of his early death. These new and expanding relations furnished opportunities of duty and occasions of trial, which ceased from this time, at least in a great degree, to be met in the strength of worldly motives or in the arts of worldly wisdom. God, in whom alone she felt she could trust, became her wisdom and strength, as well as her consolation.

6. We may well and truly say, whatever allowance it may be necessary to make for human infirmity, that God was her portion. She could say with the Psalmist, "The Lord is my fortress and deliverer,—my strength in whom I will trust." The views, which she took of religious truth

and duty, were of an elevated character, without being mixed and perverted, so far as we can perceive, with elements that are false and fanatical. It is true, that, even at this early period of her experience, the religious impulse, as if it had an instinctive conviction of the end to which it was tending, took a higher position than is ordinary, but without failing to be guided by the spirit of sound wisdom. If she was a woman, who both by nature and grace felt deeply, she was also a woman who thought clearly and strongly. Among other things it is worthy of notice, that she distinctly recognized, not only intellectually, but, what is far more important, she recognized *practically*, that God orders and pervades our allotment in life; that God is *in* life, not in the mitigated and merely speculative sense of the term, but really and fully; not merely as a passive spectator, but as the inspiring impulse and soul of all that is not sin; *in* life, in *all* life, in *all* the situations and modifications of life, for joy or for sorrow, for good or for evil. The practical as well as speculative recognition of this principle, may be regarded as a sort of first step towards a thorough walking with God. A heart unsubdued, a heart in which worldly principles predominate, does not like to see God in all things, and tries unceasingly to shake off the yoke of divine providence. To the subdued heart, on the contrary, — to the heart in which christian principles predominate, — that yoke always is, and of necessity always *must* be, just *in proportion* as such principles predominate, "the yoke which is easy and the burden which is light." Early did this Heaven-taught woman learn this. And she was willing to apply to her own situation, and to her own responsible relations, what she had thus learned. It is one thing to have the charge of a family, and another to know and to feel, that this responsible position is the arrangement and the gift of *Providence.* Providence, whose eye is unerring, had placed her in that relation; and whatever cares or sorrows might attend her position, she felt that, as a woman and emphatically as a *Christian* woman, she must recognize it as the place which God had appointed, and as involving the sphere of duty which God had imposed.

7. But we ought to add, that her care was not limited to her family, to the exclusion of other appropriate objects of Christian benevolence. She had means of doing good, which she did not fail to employ. The income of her husband's property, or rather the property of which he had the control at this time, stated in the French currency, was about forty thousand livres annually. A very large income at that period, when money had relatively a higher value than it now has. Of this amount, a certain portion was placed in her hands by her husband, to be expended by her as she might think proper. And accordingly as God gave her opportunity, and in imitation of that Saviour whom she now followed, she did what she could for the poor and the sick, discharging, without any hesitation, duties which would be exceedingly unpleasant and irksome to a mind not supported by Christian principle. "I was very assiduous," she remarks in her Life, "in performing deeds of charity. I had feelings of strong compassion for the poor, and it would have been pleasing to me to have supplied all their wants. God, in his providence, had given me an abundance; and in the employment of what he had thus bestowed upon me, I wished to do all that I could to help them. I can truly say, that there were but few of the poor in the vicinity where I lived, who did not partake of my alms. I did not hesitate to distribute among them the very best which could be furnished from my own table. It seemed as if God had made me the only almoner in this neighborhood. Being refused by others, the poor and suffering came to me in great numbers. My benefactions were not all public. I employed a person, whose business it was to dispense alms privately, without

letting it be known from whom they came. There were some families, who needed and received assistance, without being willing to accept of it as a gratuity. And I reconciled their feelings with their wants, by permitting them, in the reception of what was needful for them, to incur the formality of a debt. I speak of giving; but looking at the subject in the religious light, I had nothing to give. My language to God was, '*Oh my Divine Love, it is thy substance: I am only the steward of it; I ought to distribute it according to thy will.*' "

8. Her efforts for the good of others were not limited to gifts of food and clothing. Those who are acquainted with the state of things in France during the reign of Louis Fourteenth, know that ruinous vices prevailed at that period. The profligacy of the Court, though less intense than that which was exhibited subsequently in the time of the Regency of the Duke of Orleans and in the reign of Louis Fifteenth, could hardly fail to find imitators among the people. This will help to explain some further statements, which she makes in connection with her efforts to do good. In a number of instances, with a forethought creditable to her sound judgment as well as her piety, she informs us that she caused poor young girls, especially such as were particularly characterized by beauty of person, to be taught in some art or trade; to the end, that, having employment and means of subsistence, they might not be under a temptation to adopt vicious courses, and thus throw themselves away. And this was not all. Inspired with the sentiments which animate the hearts of some pious females of later times, she did not consider it inconsistent with religion to endeavor to reclaim those of her sex who had fallen into the grossest sins. She says, that God made use of her to reclaim several females from their disorderly lives, one of whom was distinguished by her family connections as well

as her beauty, who became not only reformed, but truly penitent and Christian in her dispositions, and died a happy death. "I went," she says, "to visit the sick, to comfort them, to make their beds. I made ointments, aided in dressing wounds, and paid the funeral expenses incurred in the interment of those who died." And as one of her methods of doing good, she adds, "I sometimes privately furnished tradesmen and mechanics, who stood in need of assistance, with the means that were requisite to enable them to prosecute their business." It is very obvious, I think, if we may rely on her own statements, as undoubtedly we may, that in acts of outward charity she did much; perhaps all that could reasonably be expected.

9. But it is to be noticed further, that under the influences of her new life, which required her to go about doing good, she labored for the spiritual, as well as the temporal benefit of others, — for the good of their souls, as well as for that of their bodies. Before the day dawned, prayers ascended from her new heart of love. "So strong, almost insatiable, was my desire for communion with God, that I arose at four o'clock to pray." Her greatest pleasure, and, comparatively speaking, her only pleasure, was to be alone with God, to pray to him, and to commune with him. She prayed for others, as well as herself. She says, "I could have wished to teach all the world to love God." Her feelings were not inoperative. Her efforts corresponded, if not absolutely, which would perhaps have been impossible, yet in a very high degree, with her desires. She says that God made use of her as an instrument in gaining many souls to himself. Her labors, however, were more successful in some cases than in others, as would naturally be expected. Speaking of one of the female relatives of her husband, who was very thoughtless on religious subjects, she remarks, "I wanted her to seek the religious state, and to practise prayer. In-

stead of complying with my request, she expressed the opinion that I was entirely destitute of all sense and wisdom, in thus depriving myself, when I had the means of enjoying them, of all the amusements of the age; but the Lord *has since opened her eyes to make her despise them.*"

10. "There was a lady of rank," she relates among some other incidents, "whom I sometimes visited. She took a particular liking to me, because, as she was pleased to say, my person and manners were agreeable to her. She said, that she observed in me something extraordinary and uncommon. My impression is, that my spiritual taste reacted upon my physical nature, and that the inward attraction of my soul appeared on my very countenance. And one reason of this opinion is, that a gentleman of fashion one day said to my husband's aunt, 'I saw the lady your niece, and it is very visible that she lives in the presence of God!' I was surprised at hearing this, as I did not suppose that a person so much addicted to the world, could have any very distinct idea of God's presence, even in the hearts of his own people. This lady, I say, began to be touched with the sense of God. The circumstances were these. At a certain time she proposed to me to go with her to the theatre. I refused to go, as, independently of my religious principles and feelings, I had never been in the habit of going to such places. The reason, which I first gave to her for not acceding to her proposition, was of a domestic nature, namely, that my husband's continual indisposition rendered it inconvenient and improper for me. Not satisfied with this, she continued to press me very earnestly to go with her. She said, that I ought not to be prevented by my husband's indispositions from taking some amusement; that the business of nursing the sick was more appropriate to older persons, and that I was too young to be thus confined to them. This led to more particular conversation. I gave her my reasons for

being particularly attentive to my husband in his seasons of ill health. But this was not all. I told her that I entirely disapproved of theatrical amusements; and that I regarded them as especially inconsistent with the duties of a Christian woman. The lady was far more advanced in years than I was; but whether it was owing in part to this circumstance or not, my remarks made such an impression on her, that she never visited such places afterwards."

11. "But our intercourse with each other did not end here. I was once in company with her and another lady, who was fond of talking, and had read the writings of the Christian Fathers. They had much conversation with each other in relation to God. The learned lady, as might be expected, talked very learnedly of him. I must confess that this sort of merely intellectual and speculative conversation, in relation to the Supreme Being, was not much to my taste. I scarcely said anything; my mind being drawn inwardly to silent and inward communion with the great and good Being, about whom my friends were speculating. They at length left me. The next day the lady, with whom I had previously had some conversation, came to see me. The Lord had touched her heart; she came as a penitent, as a seeker after religion; she could hold out in her opposition no longer. But I at once attributed this remarkable and sudden change, as I did not converse with her the day previous, to the conversation of our learned and speculative acquaintance. But she assured me it was otherwise. She said, it was not the other's conversation which affected her, but my *silence;* adding the remark, that my silence had something in it which penetrated to the bottom of her soul, and that she could not relish the other's discourse. After that time we spoke to each other with open hearts on the great subject."

12. "It was then that God left indelible impressions of grace on her soul; and she continued so athirst for him, that

she could scarcely endure to converse on any other subject. That she might be wholly his, God deprived her of a most affectionate husband. He also visited her with other severe crosses. At the same time he poured his grace so abundantly into her heart, that he soon conquered it, and became its sole master. After the death of her husband and the loss of most of her fortune, she went to reside on a small estate which yet remained to her, situated at the distance of about twelve miles from our house. She obtained my husband's consent to my going to pass a week with her, for the purpose of consoling her under her afflictions. The visit was attended with beneficial results. God was pleased to make me an instrument of spiritual good to her. I conversed much with her on religious subjects. She possessed knowledge, and was a woman of uncommon intellectual power; but being introduced into a world of new thought as well as new feeling, she was surprised at my expressing things to her so much above what is considered the ordinary range of woman's capacity. I should have been surprised at it myself, had I reflected on it. But it was God, who gave me the gift of perception and utterance, for her sake; he made me the instrument, diffusing a flood of grace into her soul, without regarding the unworthiness of the channel he was pleased to make use of. Since that time her soul has been the temple of the Holy Ghost, and our hearts have been indissolubly united." . . .

13. Religion is the same in the Catholic and in the Protestant. I speak now of the *substance*, and not of the form; of the *internal* and not of the external. Religion, so far as it *is* religion, is *always* the same; the same in all lands and in all ages; the same in its nature, the same in its results; always allied to angels and God, and always meeting with the opposition of that which is not angelic and is not God. It is not surprising, therefore, that Madame Guyon's new

heart should meet with opposition from the world's old one.

"When the world saw that I had quitted it, it persecuted me, and turned me into ridicule. I became the subject of its conversation, of its fabulous stories, and of its amusement. Given up to its irreligion and pleasures, it could not bear that a woman who was little more than twenty years of age, should thus make war against it, and overcome it." Her age was not the only circumstance that was remembered. That youth should quit the world was something, but that wealth, intelligence, and beauty, combined with youth, in the same person, should quit it, was much more. On merely human principles it could not well be explained. Some were offended; some spoke of her as a person under some species of mental delusion; some attributed her conduct to stupidity, inquiring very significantly, "What can all this mean? This lady has the reputation of knowledge and talent. But we see nothing of it."

14. But God was with her. She relates that, about this time, she and her husband went into the country on some business. She did not leave her religion on leaving her home. The river Seine flowed near the place where they staid. "*On the banks of the river*," she says, "*finding a dry and solitary place, I sought intercourse with my God.*" Her husband had gone with her into the country; but he did not accompany her there. There is something impressive in this little incident. She went alone to the banks of the Seine, to the waters of the beautiful river, and into the dry and solitary place. It was indeed a solitary place; but can we say that she who went there, went alone? *God was with her.* God, who made the woods and the waters, and who, in the beginning, walked with his holy ones amid the trees of the garden. "The communications of Divine Love," she adds, "were unutterably sweet to my soul in that retire-

ment." And thus, with God for her portion, she was happy in the loss of that portion which was taken away from her.

"Let the world despise and leave me;
They have left my Savior too;
Human hearts and looks deceive me.
Thou art not, like them, untrue.

"Man may trouble and distress me,
'T will but drive me to Thy breast;
Life with trials hard may press me;
Heaven will bring me sweeter rest."

15. Happy would it have been, if she had been exposed only to the ridicule and the opposition of those who were without. Among the members and relatives of her own family still less than ever, with the exception of her father, did she find any heart that corresponded fully to her own. It seems to have been the great object of her step-mother, who was exceedingly desirous to retain the influence over her son which she had exercised previous to his marriage, to weaken and destroy his affections for his wife. Her object was cruel as it was wicked, although she probably justified herself in it, from the fear that the benevolent disposition of Madame Guyon, both before and after experiencing religion, might result in a waste of the property of the family, if she should possess all that influence with her husband, to which such a wife was entitled. "My mother-in-law," she says, "persuaded my husband that I let everything go to wreck, and that, if she did not take care, he would be ruined." The step-mother's plan of alienating her son's affections from his wife, was seconded by the maid-servant, who has been mentioned, — a laborious and artful woman, who had rendered herself almost absolutely necessary to her master in those seasons of sickness and physical suffering of which he had a large share. The result of their combined efforts was, that he became unsettled and vacillating in his

affections, — not constant in his love; sometimes, and perhaps we may say always, when separated from their influence, truly and even passionately affectionate; at other times, and more frequently, he was distrustful and cruel.

16. In this perplexed and conflicting state of mind, it is not surprising that we find his language and his conduct equally conflicting, equally inconsistent. Sometimes he speaks to her in the language of violence and abuse, sometimes in a relenting spirit and with affection. He was not pleased with the religious change which appeared in his wife. "My husband," she says, "was out of humor with my devotion; it became insupportable to him. '*What!*' says he, '*you love God so much that you love me no longer.*' So little did he comprehend that the true conjugal love is that which is regulated by religious sentiment, and which God himself forms in the heart that loves him." At other times, when left to his better nature, he insisted much on her being present with him; and frankly recognizing what he saw was very evident, he said to her, "*One sees plainly, that you never lose the presence of God.*"

17. The sorrow, therefore, which pained her life before her conversion, remained afterwards. It was a wound of the heart, deep and terrible, but which cannot well be appreciated or expressed. To a woman who possesses those confiding and affectionate inclinations which characterize and adorn the sex, there is no compensation, there *can* be no compensation, for an absence of love, — least of all, in that sacred and ennobling relation, in which she gives up her heart, in the fond expectation of a heart's return. It is true, that it was a marriage, in the first instance, without much acquaintance; but still it was not without some degree of confidence, and still less without hope. But it ought to be said, that Madame Guyon always refers to this painful subject with dignity and candor, — not condemning others with

severity, and willing to take a full share of blame to herself. These trials would never have been known from her pen, had they not been written at the express and positive command of her spiritual Director, whom she regarded it a religious duty to obey. At the time of her writing she had no expectation that her statements would be made public. We do not think it necessary to repeat every thing that is said on this subject in her Life; it is perhaps best, that it should pass away and be forgotten. Only one or two statements more will be given.

18. The waiting-maid, who had gained so much influence over her husband, "became," she says, "every day more haughty. It seemed as if Satan were in her, to incite her to torment me. And what enraged her most of all was, that her vexatious treatment, her fretfulness, and her impertinent complaints and rebukes, had ceased to trouble me as they once did. Inwardly supported, I remained silent. It was then that she thought, that if she could hinder me from going to partake of the holy Sacrament, she would give me the greatest of all vexations. She was not mistaken, O divine Spouse of holy souls! since the only satisfaction of my life was to receive and honor Thee. The church at which I worshipped, was called the Magdalen Church. I loved to visit it. I had done something to ornament it, and to furnish it with the silver plates and chalices of the Communion service. It was there, when things were in such a situation at my house as to allow me to do it, that I retired and spent hours in prayer. It was there, with a heart filled with love, that I partook of the holy Sacrament.* This girl, who knew

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* The Catholic churches are commonly open, so that persons can enter them at all times, and perform their devotions. Such arrangements are made also, that those who desire it, mav frequently partake of the sacramental element.

where my affections were and how to wound them, took it into her head to watch me daily. Sometimes I evaded her, and had my seasons of retirement and prayer. Whenever it was otherwise, and she discovered my going thither, she immediately ran to tell my mother-in-law and my husband."

19. "One of their alleged grounds of complaint was the length of time which I spent in religious services. Accordingly, when the maid servant informed them, that I had gone to the church, it was enough to excite their angry feelings. Whenever this took place, I had no rest from their reproofs and invectives that day. If I said anything in my own justification, it was enough to make them speak against me as guilty and sacrilegious, and to cry out against all devotion. If I remained silent and made no answer at all, the result was merely to heighten their indignation, and to make them say the most unpleasant things they could devise. If I were out of health, which was not unfrequently the case, they took occasion to come and quarrel with me at my bed-side, saying that my prayers and my sacramental communions were the occasions of my sickness. As if there were nothing else which could make me ill, but my devotions to Thee, O my Lord!"

20. The efforts of the step-mother were not limited to attempts to dissociate the affections of her husband; she endeavored also to alienate from her the respect and affections of her eldest son. And she too well succeeded; although there is reason to think that he came to better dispositions in after life. There was something in this, so deep and sacred is a mother's love, which seems to have affected the feelings of Madame Guyon more keenly than anything else in her domestic afflictions. "The heaviest cross," she says, "which I was called to bear, was the loss of my eldest son's affections and his open revolt against me. He exhibited so great disregard and contempt of me, that I could not see

him without causing me severe grief." She says, that she conversed with one of her pious friends in relation to this strange and heavy trial, whose advice was, that since she could not remedy it, she must suffer it patiently, and leave every thing to God.

21. In general, she thought it best to bear her domestic trials in silence, whatever they might be. As a woman of prayer and faith, she did not look upon them exclusively in the human light; but regarding them as sent of God for some gracious purpose, she was somewhat fearful of seeking advice and consolation from any other than a divine source. Indeed she was so situated that she could not well do otherwise than she did, having but few friends at this time, with whom it would have been prudent to have consulted upon these things. Her own mother was dead. The half sister, whom she loved so much, and with whom she had been accustomed in earlier life to take counsel, was no longer living. The two sisters of her husband, constituting with him all the children of their family, who seem to have had no unfavorable dispositions, were almost constantly absent at the Benedictine Seminary. They were brought up under the care of the prioress, Genevieve Granger, a pious and discreet woman, whom we shall have occasion to mention hereafter. Those of her pious friends in whose discretion she could fully trust, were not only few in number, but it was not always easy or safe to see them. "Sometimes," she remarks on one occasion, "I said to myself, Oh that I had but any one, who would take notice of me, or to whom I might unbosom myself! what a relief it would be! But it was not granted me."

22. It ought to be added, however, in connection with the domestic trials of which we have given some account, that they were alleviated, in some degree, by the satisfaction which she took in her two younger children. They were

both lovely, and worthy to be loved. The birth of the second son has already been mentioned. The third child was a daughter, born in 1669. Of this child she speaks in the warm terms of admiration and love, dictated by the observation of her lovely traits of character, as well as by the natural strength of motherly affection. She represents her as budding and opening under her eye into an object of delightful beauty and attraction. She loved her for her loveliness; and she loved her for the God who gave her. When she was deserted by the world, when her husband became estranged from her, she pressed this young daughter to her bosom, and felt that she was blessed. This too, this cherished and sacred pleasure, was soon destined to pass away.

CHAPTER IX.

We are to consult our own improvement and good, as well as that of others. Her desires to be wholly the Lord's. Her efforts to keep the outward appetites in subjection. Remarks on this subject. The inordinate action of all parts and powers of the mind is to be subdued, as well as of the appetites. Austerities or mortifications may be practised without necessarily attaching to them the idea of expiation or of merit. Statement in relation to the monks of La Trappe. Temptations to go back again to the world. Visit to Paris. Of the errors and sins she committed there. Her grief. Her journey to Orleans and Touraine. Temptations and religious infidelities and falls repeated. Incident on the banks of the Loire. Her remarks upon her sins. Her visit to St. Cloud. Her sorrow. Inquiries on the subject of holy living.

"THOU shalt love thy neighbor as *thyself*." Our own vineyard is not to be neglected. True Christianity verifies its existence and its character, not merely in doing good to others; but partly, at least, in the regulation of our own inward nature. It is not enough to visit the sick and to teach the ignorant, to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked, while we leave our own appetites and passions unsubdued, unregulated.

2. The subject of this Memoir, however warm-hearted and diffusive may have been her charity to others, felt that there were duties which she owed to *herself*. There was something within her, which told her that God's providence, which searches through all space and reaches all hearts, had designated her, not merely as a subject of forgiveness, but

as a subject of *sanctifying* grace; not merely as a sinner to be saved, but as a living Temple in which his own Godhead should dwell. And He, who, in dwelling in the soul constitutes its true life, inspired desires within her, corresponding to these designs.

3. Referring to the great change of which we have given some account, and which she dates specifically as having taken place on the 22d of July, 1668, she says, "I had a secret desire given me *from that time*, to be wholly devoted to the disposal of my God. The language of my heart, addressing itself to my heavenly Father, was, what *couldst* thou demand of me, which I would not willingly sacrifice or offer thee? Oh, spare me not! It seemed to me that I loved God too much, willingly or knowingly to offend him. I could hardly hear God or our Lord Jesus Christ spoken of, without being almost transported out of myself."

4. And in accordance with these views, she endeavored to recognize *practically* the Savior's direction, "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." And also that other direction, "If thy right eye offend thee, *pluck it out and cast it from thee;* for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell." It is hardly necessary to say, that no man can properly be accounted as wholly the Lord's, whose appetites, which have their moral as well as physical relations, are not under control. It is very possible, that such a person may be a Christian; that is to say, a Christian in the ordinary and mitigated sense of the terms. It would certainly be reasonable to say, that he may possess a soul, which may properly be described as *forgiven;* but still it is a soul, which continues to be characterized by undue imperfections. He may possess a soul, as undoubtedly he does, to which the blood of the Atonement has been applied; but still it is a soul which

is neither fully nor adequately renovated. If it be true, that the penalty of the Divine Law, in its application to him as an individual, has been satisfied, it is equally true, I think, that the new creation of the Gospel, the reign inwardly of the Holy Ghost, has not yet fully come. The great work of sanctification must be carried on and rendered complete. And it is hardly necessary to add, that the inward man cannot be sanctified without the sanctification, in some proper sense of the terms, of that which is outward. And, accordingly, under the influence of such views as these, she was enabled, with that assistance which God always gives to those who add faith to their efforts, to subdue and to regulate, on Christian principles, this important part of our nature.

5. I am aware, that some of the methods she took seem to imply an undue degree of violence to principles of our nature, which are given us for wise purposes, and which in their appropriate action are entirely innocent. But it may properly be said, I suppose, that there is a principle involved in the practical subjection of the appetites, which will in part justify her course. It is, that an inordinate exercise of the appetites is to be overcome by what may be termed an inordinate repression; that is to say, by a repression, which under other circumstances would neither be necessary nor proper.

6. She refused for a time to indulge them in anything, in order that she might regain her lost control, and be enabled afterwards to employ them aright. She curbed them strongly and strictly, even beyond what might otherwise have been necessary, not only for the purpose of breaking their present domination, but for the purpose of annulling the terrible influence of that law of habit, which gave to their domination its permanency and power. "I kept my appetites," she says, "under great restraint; subjecting them

to a process of strict and unremitting mortification. It is impossible to subdue the inordinate action of this part of our nature, perverted as it is by long habits of vicious indulgence, unless we deny to it, for a time, the smallest relaxation. Deny it firmly that which gives it pleasure; and if it be necessary, give to it that which disgusts; and persevere in this course, until, in a certain sense, it has no choice in anything which is presented to it. If we attempt to do otherwise, if we take the course, during this warfare with the sensual nature, of granting any relaxation, giving a little here and a little there, not because it is right, but because it is *little*, we act like those persons who, under pretext of strengthening a man who is condemned to be starved to death, take the course of giving him, from time to time, a little nourishment, and who thus prolong the man's torments, while they defeat their own object."

7. "And these views will apply," she adds, "to the propensive and affectional part of our nature, as well as to the appetites; and also to the understanding and the will. We must meet their inordinate action promptly; we must eradicate from them every motive and impulse of a selfish nature, which can be found in them; otherwise we support them in a dying life to the end. The state in which we are *dying to the world*, and the state in which we are *dead to the world*, seem to me to be clearly set forth by the Apostle Paul, *as distinct from each other*. He speaks of bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus; but lest we should rest here, he fully distinguishes this from the state of *being dead, and having our life hid with Christ in God*. It is only by a total death to self that we can experience the state of divine union, and be lost in God."

8. "But when a person," she remarks further, "has once experienced this loss of self, and has become *dead to sin*, he has no further need of that extreme system of repression

and mortification, which, in connection with the divine blessing, had given him the victory. The end for which mortification was practised, is accomplished in him, and all is become new. It is an unhappy error in those good souls, who have arrived at the conquest of the bodily senses, through a series of long and unremitted mortifications, that they should still continue attached to the exercise of them. *From this time, when the senses have ceased from their inordinate action, we should permit them to accept, with indifference and equanimity of mind, whatever the Lord sees fit in his Providence to give them,—the pleasant and the unpleasant, the sweet and the bitter.*"

9. "And having obtained the victory over the appetites, he who seeks after entire holiness of heart, will pass on to other parts of our fallen nature, and will endeavor to subject the wandering intellect, the misplaced affections, and the inordinate will. Severely repressive acts, analogous to the cutting off the right hand or the plucking out of the right eye, must be put forth here also. And success may be expected to follow, if the efforts of the creature, whatever they may be, (and which are always utter weakness, without the inspiration of God and without the divine blessing,) are attended with prayer, with faith, and with the spirit of serious and devout recollection."

10. Her views of austerities or acts of mortification, as they are given in her Autobiography, and as they are interpreted and perhaps somewhat modified in her Short Method of Prayer, and her other works, are less objectionable than some might suppose, who have not carefully examined them. It is very probable, that her earliest views on this subject were incorrect and dangerous. But after she had become emancipated (which was the case at an early period of her experience,) from certain early impressions, it is obvious that she regarded acts of austerity and mortification as having

relation to the laws of our nature, and not as furnishing an atoning element; as disciplinary, and not as *expiatory*, — a distinction which is radical and of great consequence. And in accordance with this view, she thought that such austere and self-mortifying acts, which are to be practised with a reference to certain definite physical and mental results, should continue only for a time. In other words, when the end of the austerity or mortification is secured, the act itself should cease.

11. I doubt not, that the distinction which separates the idea of *expiation* from austere and self-mortifying acts, and makes them merely *disciplinary*, would be found to hold good in many instances. But without pretending to say how far this may be the case, I will relate here a single incident, which will illustrate what I mean. The monks of the celebrated monastery of La Trappe, in France, after the reform which was effected there by M. de Rancé, were exceedingly strict in their mode of life. The deprivations they endured, and the austerities they imposed upon themselves, seemed to be as great as human nature is well capable of enduring. A person at a certain time visited the monastery; and witnessing the austerities which were practised, he expressed to the monks his admiration of their self-denial in rejecting those indulgences which were so common among other persons. The monks, laying their hands on their hearts, with a look of deep humiliation, replied in words to this effect. "We bless God, that we find him all-sufficient without the possession of those things to which you have referred. We reject all such possessions and indulgences, but without *claiming any merit for it.* Our deepest penances are proper subjects of repentance. We should have been here to little purpose, had we not learned that our penitential acts, performed with too little feeling, are not such as they should be; and that our righteousness is not free from imperfection

and pollution. Whatever we may endure, or for whatever reason it may be done, we ascribe all our hopes of mercy and acceptance, to the blood of Christ alone."*

12. The subjection of the appetites, which has a close connection with mental purity, and is exceedingly important, constitutes but a part, and perhaps we may say but a small part, of that physical and mental contest and victory, to which the Christian is called. His whole nature, every thought and every feeling, every act of the desires and of the will, is to be brought into subjection to the law of Christ. We may well suppose, that the pious subject of this Memoir, with the great powers of analysis and reflection she possessed, fully understood this. The statements which we have just now quoted from her, show that she did. It was her desire and purpose, both in body and in spirit, to be wholly the Lord's. But she found that the contest, which she was summoned to carry on with other and higher parts of her nature, was more trying and less successful, than that which she had prosecuted in other respects.

13. Under the influence of principles, which are good when they are not inordinate, she found to her great grief that she still loved to hear and to know more than a sanctified Christianity would allow. Man, under the influence of the natural life, is disposed to diffuse himself, — to overleap the humbling barriers of God's providence, and to mingle in what is not his own. The principle of curiosity, always strong, but especially so in a mind like hers, was not only not dead, but what is still more important, it ceased to be properly regulated. It was still a matter of interest with her, (more so, as it seemed to her, than was consistent with entire holiness of heart,) to see and to be seen, and to ex-

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* Account of the Monastery of La Trappe, and of the Institution of Port Royal, by Mary Anne Schimmelpenninck, vol. i. p. 140.

perience the pleasures of worldly intercourse and conversation.

14. At one time, the contest which she experienced in this direction, was very considerable. Satan knew how and where to aim his arrows. He had sagacity enough to perceive that she was not a woman that could easily be subdued by appeals and temptations applied to her physical nature, but that they must be made to her great powers of intellect, her pride of character, and her desire of personal admiration and of personal influence. The suggestion came insidiously, but it entered deeply into the heart. For two years she had labored faithfully in the cause of Christ. We do not mean to say, that she had been without sin, but that she had struggled faithfully, though sometimes unsuccessfully against sin, and without ever thinking, for a moment, of yielding quietly to its solicitations and influences. And it was not till after all this favorable probation, that the secret whisper, breathed out gently and with great art, came to her soul. It came from the source of all evil, and was applied with Satanic skill. Is it possible, that I must so far give up all to God, that I shall have nothing left for the world? In this age of refinement and pleasure, when everything is awake to intelligence, and when there is apparently but one voice of joy, is it necessary, or even reasonable, that my eye should be shut and my ears closed, and my lips silent? The assault was made with so much adroitness, that her religious resolution, after having been strenuously sustained for some time, began to waver.

15. It is in connection with this state of things in her mental experience, that she speaks of a visit of some length, which she made in the city of Paris, — her usual residence being a short distance out of the city. The reasons which called her to reside there at this particular time, she does not state. Under other circumstances she had made a

previous visit of some length, which we have already had occasion to mention. During this subsequent residence there, she says, in expressions which convey an ominous import to the religious mind, "*I relaxed in my usual religious exercises, on account of the little time I had.*" It is hardly necessary to remark, that religious declensions generally begin in this way. When she first went to Paris at this period, she seems to have been comparatively in a good religious state. She speaks of God's grace to her, — of his continual presence and care. She had experienced some heavy temptations and trials before, but does not appear to have yielded to them in any great degree. But she felt here, as she had not felt before, since she professed to walk in a new life, — the dangerous power of the heart, even of the *Christian* heart, whenever it is left to itself, and is unrestrained by divine grace. Speaking of her internal state about this time, she says, "I seemed to myself to be like one of those young brides, who find a difficulty after their marriage, in laying aside their self-indulgence and self-love, and in faithfully following their husbands into the duties and cares of life." To a mind that was not fully established in the religious life, or which was temporarily shaken in its religious principles, — Paris, which was not more the centre of civilization and of science, than it was of worldly pleasure and of fashion, was a place full of hazard. She found the temptation great; and it is a sad commentary on human weakness when we say, that she in some degree yielded to it.

16. She says, "*I did many things which I ought not to have done.*" What these things were, we do not fully know. She mentions, however, as one thing which gave her trouble, that she felt an improper gratification in receiving the attentions of others. In other words her vanity still lived. There were a number of persons in the city, apparently persons

without experimental religion, who were extremely fond of her; and it was one of the faults which she speaks of having committed at this time, that she allowed them to express their personal regard in too strong terms, without checking it as she ought. It appears also from some remarks she makes, that she regarded herself as having conformed too much to the dress of the Parisian ladies. Among other things, which indicate her sense of her danger and of her actual unfaithfulness to God, she speaks of promenading in the public walks of the city; a practice not necessarily improper or sinful. But she gives us to understand that she did not do it merely out of complaisance to her friends who desired her company, nor for the physical pleasure and benefit which might be expected from the practice; but partly, at least, from the unsanctified feeling of personal display, the desire of seeing and of *being seen.* But deeply did she lament these falls.

17. "As I saw that the purity of my state was likely to be sullied by a too great intercourse with the world, I made haste to finish the business, which detained me at Paris, in order to return into the country. It is true, O God, I felt that thou hadst given me strength enough, in connection with thy promised assistance, to avoid the occasions of evil. But I found myself, in the city of Paris, in a situation of peculiar temptation. And I had so far yielded to the evil influences, to which I had been exposed, that I found it difficult to resist the vain ceremonies and complaisances, which characterize fashionable life. Invited to join in the pleasures to which the world was so generally and strongly devoted, I was very far from tasting the satisfaction, which they seemed to give to others. '*Alas!*' said I, '*this is not my God, and nothing beside him can give solid pleasure.*'

18. "I was not only disappointed, but I felt the deep sorrow, which always afflicts unfaithful souls. I cannot well

describe the anguish, of which I was the subject. It was like a consuming fire. Banished from the presence of my beloved, my bridegroom, how could I be happy! I could not find access to him, and I certainly could not find rest out of him. I knew not what to do. I was like the dove out of the Ark; which, finding no rest for the sole of its foot, was constrained to return again; but finding the window shut, could only fly about without being able to enter."

19. Her husband, with the keen eye of one, who did not consider the value of her natural character as enhanced at all by her religious traits, saw her position, and we may well suppose secretly rejoiced at it. It was no disquiet to him, looking at the matter in the worldly light, that she had made her appearance in the fashionable companies of the most gay and fashionable city in the world. And still he could not but see, that the snare, which was thus laid for the faith and piety of his wife, in the attractions and assemblies of Paris, had in some degree failed. He was not ignorant that she had both seen her danger, and had exhibited the wisdom and the decision to flee from it. But certainly, if her religious principle was thus severely tested at Paris, there could be no hazard to it, in her making an excursion into the country, among mountains and rivers, and others of God's great works. This, obviously, was a very natural suggestion. It was proposed, therefore, that she should take a distant journey. Her husband could go with her, and was ready to do it. His state of health was such, that it could hardly fail to be beneficial. And if her own health should not be improved, as it would be very likely to be, it would certainly contribute to her happiness. And it was an incidental consideration which had its weight, that her parents came from Montargis, the place of her early life and recollections, which could be visited in the way. Orleans, too, which it was contemplated to visit in the tour, was a celebrated and beautiful city.

Nor was it a small thing to an imaginative mind like hers, to tread the banks and to behold the scenery of the magnificent Loire. With that great river there were some interesting recollections connected. Not many years before, its waters had been wedded to those of the Seine by the canal of Briare; an astonishing work, which was a monument of the enterprise of her husband's father, and the principal source of the wealth of her family. Hence arose the journey to the distant province of Touraine. This may be dated, I think, from a comparison of different parts of her narrative, in the spring or summer of 1670.

20. But this journey also, undertaken under more favorable auspices than her visit to Paris, was attended with temptation and sin. During the life of her husband, she generally journeyed in a carriage, and with such attendants and equipage as was thought suitable to her position in society, or as her husband's desires and tastes might dictate. And as she travelled from town to town, in the Orleanois and down the banks of the river Loire, the Loire known in history and song, her eye betrayed her heart, and she found the spirit of worldly interest again waking up within her. But the company of others, involving as it does the suggestions and solicitations of unsanctified nature, is sometimes more dangerous than the sight of cities or of the works of nature and art. In that part of France her father's family and her husband's had been known, so that her movements were not likely to be kept secret. Her personal reputation had preceded her. Her powers of conversation were remarkable; and were always felt when she was disposed to exert them. Men were taken also with her beauty and her wealth. "In this journey," she says, "abundance of visits and applauses were bestowed upon me; and I, who had already experienced the pangs of being unfaithful to God, found emotions of vanity once more springing to life within

me. Strange as it may appear, and after all the bitterness I had experienced, I loved human applause, while I clearly perceived its folly. And I loved that in myself which caused this applause, while in the conflict of my mind's feelings, I desired to be delivered from it. The life of nature was pleased with public favor; but the life of grace made me see the danger of it, and dread it. Oh, what pangs the heart feels which is in this situation! Deep was the affliction which this combat of grace and nature cost me! What rendered my position the more dangerous was, that they not only praised my youth and beauty, but passed compliments upon my virtue. But this I could not receive. I had been too deeply taught that there is nothing but unworthiness and weakness in myself, and that all goodness is from God."

21. "We met with some accidents," she says, "in this journey, which were sufficient to have impressed and terrified any one. And it is proper for me to say, with gratitude, that though the corruptions of my nature prevailed against me, to the extent and in the manner which I have just mentioned, my Heavenly Father did not desert me. He kept me submissive and resigned in dangers, where there seemed to be no possibility of escape. At one time, as we were travelling on the banks of the Loire, we got into a narrow path, from which we could not well retreat. The waves of the river washed the base of the narrow road which was before us, and partly undermined it, so that it was necessary for our footmen to support one side of the carriage, in order to pass it over. All around me were terrified; but God kept me in tranquillity. Indeed, sensible of my weakness, and fearful that I might still more dishonor Him, I seemed to have a secret desire, that He would take me out of the temptations and trials of the world, by some sudden stroke of his providence."

22. It is obvious, I think, that in this excursion, which

she designates as her journey to Orleans and Touraine, she yielded in some degree to the temptations to which she was subject. Such was her own impression, at least; and in the sorrow and depression of her spirit, she went in search of religious friends and teachers, to confess and lament her backslidings. But they did not, or perhaps could not, enter into her feelings. "They did not condemn," she says, "what God condemned; and treated those things as excusable and proper, which seemed to me to be disapproved and even detestable in His sight. But in saying that they wholly extenuated my faults, or did not consider them very great, I ought to add, that they did not understand, (nobody but myself *could* understand,) how much God had done for me. Instead of measuring my faults by the mercies and graces which God had conferred upon me, they only considered what I was, in comparison *with what I might have been.* Hence, instead of blaming me, their remarks tended rather to flatter my pride, and to justify me in things which incurred the Divine displeasure and rebuke.

23. "It is an important remark, that a sin is not to be measured merely by its nature, *in itself considered;* but also by the state of the person who commits it; as the least unfaithfulness in a wife is more injurious to a husband, and affects him more deeply, than far greater acts of unkindness and neglect in his domestics. I had given myself to God in a bond of union more sacred than any human tie. Was it possible, then, to bestow my thoughts and affections on another, without offending Him to whom my soul had already betrothed itself? My trials were connected, in part, with the fashions of those gay times, the modes of dress, and methods of personal intercourse. It seemed to me, that the dress of the ladies, with whom, in my journey to Orleans and Touraine, I was led almost necessarily to associate, was hardly consistent with Christian, or even natural modesty

and decorum. I did not wholly conform to the prevalent modes, but I went too far in that direction.

24. "It is true, that my associates, seeing that I covered my neck much more than was common for females at that time, assured me that I was quite modest and Christian-like in my attire; and as my husband liked my dress, there could be nothing amiss in it. But there was something within me, which told me that it was not so. The Christian knows what it is to hear the voice of God in his soul. This inward voice troubled me. It seemed to say, whither art thou going, thou "whom my soul loveth"? Divine love drew me gently and sweetly in one direction; while natural vanity violently dragged me in another. I was undecided; loving God, but not wholly willing to give up the world. My heart was rent asunder by the contest."

25. This was indeed a sad state to be in. But it is proper to say, that there was one marked difference between the present and her former state. In the days of her life of nature, at least in that period before which God began to operate in her by his Holy Spirit, she not only sinned, but had in reality no disposition to do otherwise. She *loved* to sin. It was different now. Renovated, though imperfect, — sincerely desirous to do right, though often failing to do so, because she was not enlightened in the way of holy living by faith alone, — she could not fall into transgression without experiencing the deepest sorrow and torment of mind. Sin had lost the sweetness which once characterized it. She began to perceive, that even the smallest transgression cannot fail to separate from God. The wretchedness, therefore, which it occasioned, when she found in any case that she had sinned against her Heavenly Father, was inexpressible.

26. If, under the impulse of an unsanctified curiosity, she gave an unguarded look, — if in a moment of temptation she uttered a hasty reply to the rebukes and accusations of

others, (moral delinquencies which some might not regard as very great,) — she found that it cost her bitter tears. Even when she dispensed her munificent charity, which brought consolation to the poor and suffering, she sometimes found, with sorrow of heart, that the donation which ought to have been made with "*a single eye*," was corrupted by a glance at the rewards of self-complacency and of worldly applause.

27. "The God of love," she says, "so enlightened my heart, and so scrutinized its secret springs, that the smallest defects became exposed. In my conversation with others, I could often discover some secret motive which was evil, and was in consequence compelled to keep silence. And even my silence, when examined by the aid of the divine light, was not exempt from imperfection. If I was led to converse about myself, and said anything in my own favor, I discovered pride. And I could not even walk the streets, without sometimes noticing in my movements the impulse of the life of self." She seemed to be in the condition described in the seventh chapter of Romans, — a description which will apply both to the struggles of the enlightened sinner when deeply convicted of his transgressions, and to the inward conflicts of the partially sanctified Christian. "I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin.

28. "It must not be supposed, however," she adds further, "that God suffered my faults to go unpunished. Oh, my God! — with what rigor dost thou punish the most faithful, the most loving and beloved of thy children! The anguish which the truly devout soul experiences, when it sees sin in itself, is inexpressible. The method which God takes inwardly to correct those whom he designs to purify radically and completely, must be felt, in order to be understood. The anguish of the soul, in consequence of its inward conscious-

ness of failing to do its duty, can perhaps best be expressed by calling it a secret burning, — an internal fire. Or perhaps it may be compared to a dislocated joint, which is in incessant torment, until the bone is replaced. Sometimes such a soul is tempted to look to men and to seek consolation in the creature; but this is in violation of God's designs upon it, and it cannot in that way find any true rest. It is best to endure patiently, till God sees fit, in his own time and way, to remove the agony, and thus learn effectually the bitterness of transgression."

28. In this divided state of mind, continually striving for a better religious state, and yet continually faltering and failing in the resolutions she had most seriously made, she received an invitation to make one in a fashionable party to visit St. Cloud. This beautiful village, situated on the banks of the Seine, at the distance of only six miles from Paris, was then, as it is now, the resort of fashionable society. Celebrated for its natural scenery, its park, and the magnificent palace and gardens of the Duke of Orleans, it was the chosen spot for the residences of many families of wealth and taste. Without supposing that it had any connection with her present movements, it may be worthy of notice, that one of the country residences of the celebrated Comptroller Fouquet, — whose son many years afterwards married the second daughter of Madame Guyon, — was situated in this delightful place. It happened that other ladies, with whom she was well acquainted, were invited to the festival; and it would seem that their solicitations were employed to induce her to go with them. She yielded to them, but not without condemning herself for doing it.

29. "I went," she says, "through a spirit of weak compliance, and from the impulse of vanity. Every thing connected with the entertainment which was given us, was magnificent. It was an occasion especially adapted to meet

the wants and views of the votaries of worldly pleasure. The ladies who attended me, wise in worldly wisdom, but not in the things of religion, relished it. But as for me, it filled me with bitterness. I pleased others; but I offended Him whom I ought most to have pleased. Rich were the tables that were spread, but I could eat nothing. The sounds of festivity and joy arose on every side; but it was not possible for me to enjoy anything. Pleasure shone in the looks of other visitants, but sorrow was written upon mine. Oh, what tears did this false step cost me! My Beloved was offended. For above three long months he withdrew entirely the favors of his presence. I could see nothing but an angry God before me."

30. The good of others, who may read this account, makes it proper to say, that there was one important lesson which she learned from these temptations and follies, — a lesson as important as any which the nature of the Christian life renders indispensable, — that of her entire dependence on divine grace. "I became," she says, "deeply assured of what the prophet hath said, '*Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain!*' When I looked to Thee, O my Lord! thou wast my faithful keeper; thou didst continually defend my heart against all kinds of enemies. But, alas! when left to myself, I was all weakness. How easily did my enemies prevail over me! Let others ascribe their victories to their own fidelity. As for myself, I shall never attribute them to anything else than Thy paternal care over me. I have too often experienced, to my cost, what I should be without Thee, to presume in the least on any wisdom or efforts of my own. It is to Thee, O God, my Deliverer, that I owe everything! And it is a source of infinite satisfaction, that I am thus indebted to Thee."

31. It is not surprising, that she now found it necessary to pause and reflect. From this time, she gave her mind to

the great subject of holy living, with a deep and solemn earnestness, which she had never experienced before. She began to realize the tremendous import of those solemn words of the Saviour, (words which have an import that is not generally understood, though it is not possible that their meaning should always be hidden,) "*No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.*"

32. There is but one way for the Christian to walk in. It is not possible that there should be any other. "*A straight and narrow way,*" it is true; but still, properly speaking, not a *difficult way*. Undoubtedly it is difficult to a heart that is naturally averse to it, to enter into it; and it is difficult to such a heart to become entirely naturalized to it. Sometimes the difficulty which is experienced within these limits, is very great. But when once the process is fairly begun, and the influence of old habits is broken, the difficulty which had been experienced, is, in a great degree, removed; and it becomes true, as the Saviour has said, that his "yoke is easy, and his burden is light."

33. But people do not understand this; FIRST, because, in a multitude of cases, they do not make the experiment at all, — they do not *even enter into the way;* and SECONDLY, because they do not persevere in the experiment when made, sufficiently long to render it a fair one. But whether difficult or not, whether the difficulty continues for a longer or shorter time, it is God's way, and, therefore, the only true and safe way. But why is it described as a straight and narrow way? I answer, not because it is or can be difficult to one whose heart is right, but because it is a way in which every step is regulated by God's will. It is a way of one principle, and cannot, therefore, be otherwise than both straight and narrow. Any deviation from that will, however

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slight it may be, is necessarily a step out of the way. It may be concisely described, therefore, as a way in God's will. And this truly is the way of life. It is not only the way *which leads to life*, as the Scriptures express it; but it does of itself constitute a life, *because he, who is in God's will, is in life, and life is in him.* "This," says the Apostle John, "is the Record, — That God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. *He, that hath the Son, hath life; and he, that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.*" *

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* First Epis. of John, viii. 11, 12.

Lincoln Christian College

CHAPTER X.

Reference to her early views of her Christian state. Her surprise at the discovery of the remains of sin in herself. Seeks assistance and advice from others. Remarks on the religious character of that age. Consults with Genevieve Granger, the Prioress of the Benedictines. Attends religious services at the church of Nôtre Dame in Paris. On her way thither she has an extraordinary interview with a person unknown. His advice to her. Renewed consecration, in which she gives up all without reserve. Attacked by the small pox. Treatment experienced from her stepmother. Death of her youngest son. Her feelings. Her poetical writings. Justice of God amiable.

In this season of temptation and penitence, of trial and of comparative despondency, she looked around for advice and assistance. Not fully informed, as she herself expressly states, in respect to the nature of the inward life, she felt perplexed and confounded at the knowledge of her own situation. In the first joy of her spiritual espousals, she seems to have looked upon herself, as is frequently the case at that period of religious experience, not only as a sinner forgiven for the sins which are past; but what is a very different thing, as a sinner saved from the commission of sin for the present, and in all future time. Looking at the subject in the excited state of her young love, when the turbulent emotions perplex the calm exercises of the judgment, she appears to have regarded the victory which God had given her, as one which would stand against all possible assaults; the greatness of her triumph for to-day, scarcely exceeding the strength of her confidence for to-morrow. She felt no sting in her conscience; she bore no cloud on her brow.

2. How surprised, then, was she to find, after a short period, and after a more close and thorough examination, that her best acts were mingled with some degree of imperfection and sin; and that every day, as she was increasingly enlightened by the Holy Ghost, she seemed to discover more and more of motives to action, which might be described as sinful. After all her struggles and all her hopes, she found herself in the situation of being condemned to bear about a secret but terrible enemy in her own bosom. Under these circumstances it was natural for her to look around for some religious person, who might render her some assistance. Were others in the same situation? Was it our destiny to be always sinning and always repenting? Was there really no hope of deliverance from transgression till we might find it in the grave? Such were some of the questions which arose in her mind. Who could tell her what to do, or how to do it?

3. This was not an age, so far as I can perceive, which was distinguished for piety. I speak particularly of France. Pious individuals undoubtedly there were, but piety was not its characteristic. The Spirit of God, operating in some hearts, carried on the great work of mental renovation. We cannot well forget, that it was in this age, that the Port Royalists acquired a name, which will long be celebrated. From time to time, some gay young people of Paris or of the provinces, sick of the vanities of the world, went into religious retirement, and were known no more, except by pious works and prayers. Others, like the celebrated M. Bouthillier de Rancé, possessed of talents that would have signalized almost any name, found their career of aspiring worldliness coming in conflict with the arrangements of Providence, and were ultimately led in the way, which at

the time seemed full of sorrow and perplexity, to adore the hand which secretly smote them. We cannot well forget, that the daughters of the great Colbert, the Sully of the age of Louis Fourteenth, ladies alike distinguished by character and by position in society, set an illustrious example, in a corrupt period of the world, of sincere, decided, and unaffected piety. This was the age, and this the country of Nicole and Arnauld, of Pascal and Racine. In the retirement of La Trappe, as well as in the cells of Port Royal, at St. Cyr, and, strange to say, within the terrible walls of the Bastille, prayers ascended from devout hearts.* And may we not say, with good reason, that, in every age and every country, God has a people; that, in periods of religious declension as well as at other times, he has his followers, few though they may be, who are known, appreciated and beloved, by Him whose favor alone is life.

4. But however this may be, it is still true, that Madame Guyon did not find, in the situation in which she was placed, those helps from personal intercourse, which would have been desirable. Christian friends of deep piety and of sound judgment, were few in number. But there were some such, to whom she had access. One of whom, in particular, Genevieve Granger, the devout and judicious Prioress of a community of Benedictines established a short distance from the place of her residence, she often mentions. To the acquaintance of this individual she had been introduced some years before by the Franciscan, whom Providence had employed as the special means of her conversion. The acquaintance thus formed was rendered the more natural and easy by the

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* I refer in this remark, among other instances which might be mentioned, to the case of Father Seguenot, a priest of the Congregation of the Oratory, and to that of M. de St. Claude, a distinguished Port Royalist and a man of great piety, both of whom were confined in the dungeons of the Bastille.

circumstance, that her husband's sisters were at this time, and had been for some time previous, under the care of the Prioress. It was to her, more freely and more fully than to any other, that she made known the temptations she had experienced, and the falls of which she had been guilty.

5. This pious woman, who, from a personal observation of her course, as well as from private conversation, understood Madame Guyon's religious position, encouraged her much in her hopes and purposes of a new and amended life. She probably had some foresight of the position which Providence might call her to occupy, and of the influence she might exert. Certain it is, that she felt it her duty to explain to her the great difficulty of uniting a conformity with the world, even to that limited extent in which she had found herself involved in it, with an entire fulfilment of Christian obligations. Her own personal experience was calculated to add weight to her suggestions. Adopting the principle, that it is possible for us, even amid the temptations of the present life, *to live wholly to God*, she was unwilling to see any one, especially such a person as Madame Guyon, adopting a standard of feeling and action, which should fall anywhere below the mark of entire consecration and of perfect faith and love.

6. It was at this period of her personal history, that the subject of this memoir began to have a more distinct and realizing perception of what is implied in a sanctified life. Some portions of her reading, as well as her personal experience, had been favorable to this result. In the Life of Madame de Chantal, which she had read with great interest, she found the doctrine of holiness, so far as it may be supposed to consist in a will subjected to God, and in a heart filled with love, illustrated in daily living and practice, as well as asserted as a doctrine. The writings of Francis de Sales are characterized, in distinction from many other de-

vout writings of the period in which he lived, by insisting on continual walking with God, on the entire surrender of the human will to the divine, and on the existence of pure love. The writings of this devout and learned man seem to have been her constant companions through life. The Imitation of Christ, generally ascribed to Thomas a Kempis, another of the works with which she was familiar, is animated by the same spirit of high Christian attainment. All these writers, in different ways and under different forms of expression, agree in strenuously teaching, that the whole heart, the whole life should be given to God; and that in some true sense this entire surrender, not excluding, however, a constant sense of demerit and of dependence on God, and the constant need of the application of Christ's blood, is in reality not less practicable than it is obligatory.

7. Her mind, therefore, had been prepared both by what she had read and by what she had been inwardly taught, to receive promptly, and to confide strongly in, the suggestions and admonitions of the Benedictine Prioress. And her confidence seems to have been very properly placed. It is true we must judge, at the present time, of the character of Genevieve Granger, the individual to whom we now refer, from the few facts which can be gathered from the writings of Madame Guyon. But these are enough to show, that she was a woman who combined strength of intellect with humble piety. The world did not know her, but she was not unknown to Him who made the world. She may be described, I think, as one of those who live in the world without the debasements of a worldly spirit, and of whom it can be said, in the language of Scripture, that "*the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.*" And it is well for those who are seeking religion, or who are inquiring the methods of progress in religion, to learn of those who have thus been taught.

8. At this most interesting juncture in her religious experience, an incident occurred, which was somewhat remarkable, and which made a deep impression on her mind. It was an incident, an occurrence, (speaking after the manner of men,) but the hand of the Lord was in it. She went at a certain time, from her residence, to attend some religious services which were to take place in the celebrated church of Notre Dame at Paris. As the weather was inviting, she did not take a carriage as she usually did, but decided to walk, although her house was some miles distant. She was attended, however, by a footman, as she generally was at this period of her life whenever she went abroad. Just as they had passed one of the bridges erected over the River Seine, a person appeared at her side and entered into conversation; — a man religiously solemn and instructive in his appearance and intercourse, but so poor and almost repulsive in his attire, that, at their first meeting, thinking him an object of charity, she offered him alms.

9. "This man spoke to me," she says, "in a wonderful manner, of God and divine things. His remarks on the Holy Trinity were more instructive and sublime, than I had heard on any other occasion or from any other person. But his conversation was chiefly personal. I know not how it was, but he seemed in some way to have acquired a remarkable knowledge of my character. He professed to regard me as a Christian, and spoke especially of my love to God, and of my numerous charities to the poor. And, while he recognized all that was good and christian-like in me, he felt it his duty to speak to me plainly of my faults. He told me, that I was too fond of my personal attractions; and enumerated, one after another, the various faults and imperfections which characterized this period of my life. And then, assuming a higher tone of religious precept, he gave me to understand that God required not merely a heart of which it could only

be said it is forgiven, but a heart which could properly, and in some real sense, be designated as *holy;* that it was not sufficient to escape hell, but that he demanded also the subjection of the evils of our nature, and the utmost purity and height of Christian attainment. The circumstance of his wearing the dress of a mendicant, did not prevent his speaking like one having authority. There was something in him incapable of being concealed by the poverty of his outward appearance, which commanded my silence and profound respect. The Spirit of God bore witness to what he said. The words of this remarkable man, whom I never saw before, and whom I have never seen since, penetrated my very soul. Deeply affected and overcome by what he had said, I had no sooner reached the church than I fainted away."

10. Previously to this period, Madame Guyon had learned the great lesson of recognizing God in his Providences. And under the influence of this indispensable knowledge, she could not doubt who it was that was speaking to her in the voice of his servants. Aroused by what she had experienced of her own weakness, and startled into solemn thought by these repeated warnings, *she gave herself to the Lord anew.*

11. And here, I think, we may mark a distinct and very important crisis in the history of her spiritual being. Taught by sad experience, she saw the utter impossibility of combining the love of the world with the love of God. "From this day, this hour, if it be possible, I will be wholly the Lord's. The world shall have no portion in me." Such was the language of her heart; such her solemn determination. She formed her resolution after counting the cost, — a resolution which was made in God's strength and not in her own; which, in after life, was often smitten by the storm and tried in the fire; but, from this time onward, so far as we know anything of her history, was never consumed, — was

never broken. She gave herself to the Lord, not only to be his in the ordinary and mitigated sense of the terms, but to be his *wholly*, and to be his *forever;* to be his in body and in spirit; to be his in personal efforts and influence; to be his in all that she *was*, and in all that it was *possible for her to be.* There was no reserve.

12. Her consecration, made in the spirit of entire self-renouncement, was a consecration to God's will, and not *to her own;* to be what God would have her to be, and not what her fallen nature would have her to be. Two years after this time, she placed her signature to a written act of Covenant or act of Consecration, (a circumstance which we shall have occasion to mention in its place,) but the act itself, she made previously, made it *now*, and made it *irrevocable.* In its substance it was written in the heart, wherever else it might fail for a time to be recorded, and was witnessed by the Holy Ghost. God accepted the offering of herself which she thus made, because he knew it to be sincere. And perhaps we may properly add, that he knew it to be sincere, because he himself, who is the Author of every good purpose, had inspired it.

13. Desire, even *religious* desire, without a strong basis of *sincerity*, often stops short of affecting the will. But, in religion especially, desire without will is practically of no value. But the error which is alluded to in this statement, did not attach to Madame Guyon at this time. She not only desired to be holy, but she resolved to be holy. Her *will* was in the thing,—the will, which constitutes in its action the unity of the whole mind's action, and which is the true and only certain exponent of the inward moral and religious condition.

14. And perhaps we may be permitted to say, in this connection, that it is here that we find the great difficulty in the position of many religious men at the present time.

They profess to desire to be holy; and perhaps they do desire it. They pray for it, as well as desire it. But after all, it is too often the case that they are *not willing to be holy.* They are not ready, by a consecrating act, resting on a deliberate and solemn purpose, to place themselves in a position, which they have every reason to think will, by God's grace, result in holiness. This may be regarded, perhaps, as a nice distinction; but when rightly understood, it seems to me to lay deep and unchangeable in the mind. In the cases to which we refer, the desire, whatever may be its strength, is not strong enough to control the volition. The will, therefore, is not brought into the true position. The will, considered in relation to the other powers of the mind, constitutes the mind's unity. The will is wanting. The man, therefore, is wanting.

15. And in corroboration of these remarks, it may be added further, that in repeated instances individuals have been known frankly to acknowledge, that these statements, or statements the same in effect with these, truly described their position. Whatever may have been their desire to experience the great blessing of inward sanctification, they have said, that the desire was not strong enough to terminate itself in a *purpose.*

They could not say, or rather they would not say, I *will* be the Lord's. They had not placed themselves, and in their present state of feeling they would not place themselves by what may be termed a "*volitional*" act, (an act of the will representing the whole mind, an act constituting a decisive and irrevocable mental movement,) in a situation in which the Lord could consistently and effectually operate upon them by his Holy Spirit, and thus complete this great work. They had been made willing, as it seemed to them, that God should save them from their past sins in his appointed way; and they did not cease to be willing that their salvation from the penalty of all such sins should continue to be by Christ alone. They had thus died the first death; but they were not willing to die what I think may properly be called, in the progress of inward experience, the *second death.*

16. And with many it seems to be an opinion, that there is no second death to die. Already dead to all claims of personal merit in the matter of salvation, and thinking that they may now live on their own stock, and in the strength of their own vitality and power, they do not understand, (alas, how few do understand it!) that they must not only die to their own MERITS, but must die to their own LIFE; that they must not only die to Christ on the cross that they may *begin* to have the true life; but that they must die to Christ on the cross, that they may *continue* to have life. In other words, they must not only be so broken and humbled as to receive Christ as a Savior from hell; but must be willing also, renouncing all natural desire and all human strength, and all of man's wisdom and man's hope, and all self-will, to receive him as a Savior, moment by moment, from sin.

17. And this (perhaps because they do not fully understand the necessity of it) they are not *willing* to do; and therefore, although they have God's promise to help them, they will not purpose and resolve to do it. Their wills do not correspond with what *must* be, with what God *requires* to be, and cannot do otherwise than require to be, just so far as He carries on and completes the work of sanctification in the soul; namely, that God's own hand must lay the axe of inward crucifixion unsparingly at the root of the natural life; that God in Christ, operating in the person of the Holy Ghost, must be the principle of inward inspiration *moment by moment*, the crucifier of every wrong desire and purpose, the Author of every right and holy purpose, the Light and Life of the soul.

18. But upon this altar of sacrifice, terrible as it is to the natural mind, Madame Guyon did not hesitate to place herself, believing that God would accomplish his own work in his own time and way. She invited the hand of the destroyer, that she might live again from the ruins of that which should be slain. He, who does not willingly afflict his children, but rather pities them as a Father, accepted the work which was thus committed to him. It is sometimes the case, that God subdues and exterminates that inordinate action of the mind, which is conveniently denominated the life of nature by the inward teaching and operation of the Holy Ghost, independently, in a considerable degree, of the agency of any marked providences. Such cases, however, are rare. Much more frequently it is done, by the appropriate application of his providences, in connection with the inward influence.

19. It was this combined process, to which the subject of this Memoir, in the spirit of a heart that seeks its own destruction, submitted herself. She had given herself to God without reserve; and he did not long withhold, or conceal the evidence of her acceptance. The one followed the other without delay and without misgiving. Knowing that her own resolutions, and her spirit of self-sacrifice, independently of his foresight and assistance, would be of no avail, He arranged a series of physical and moral adjustments, which resulted in blow after blow, till the pride of nature, which sometimes stands like a wall of adamant, was thoroughly broken. It was then, and not till then, that her soul entered into that state of purity and rest, which she has significantly denominated its state of "*simplicity;*" a state in which the soul has but one motive, that *of God's will*, and but one source of happiness, that *of God's glory*. It is not merely a state of consecration *to* God's will; but a state of union and rest *in* his will.

20. The first thing He did was to smite her beauty with that dreadful scourge of the human race, the small-pox. The summer was over; her ear no longer listened to the waters of the Loire; the festivities of St. Cloud and Paris had passed away. On the 4th of October, 1670, (she is particular to mark the month and the day,) the blow came upon her like lightning from heaven. This dreadful disease was not then shorn of its terrors by that merciful Providence, which directed the philosophic mind of Jenner in the discovery of its wonderful preventive. And she was thus smitten when she was a little more than twenty-two years of age, — a period of life when beauty of person does not cease to be prized. When it was discovered that the hand of the Lord was thus upon her, her friends, not excluding those in all probability who had endeavored to lead her into the follies of fashionable life, exhibited great emotion. They came around her bedside, and almost forgetting that her life was in danger, deplored in feeling language the mysterious and fatal attack, which was thus made upon charms which had been so much celebrated.

21. Alluding to the temptations she had experienced, and to her temporary indulgence in the displays of fashionable life, she says, "before I fell under this disease I resembled those animals, destined for slaughter, which on certain days they adorn with greens and flowers, and bring in pomp into the city, before they kill them." She represents the disease as having been very severe. "My whole body," she says, "looked like that of a leper. All, who saw me, said, they had never seen such a shocking spectacle. But the devastation without was counterbalanced by peace within. My soul was kept in a state of contentment, greater than can be expressed. Reminded continually of one of the causes of my religious trials and falls, I indulged the hope of regaining my inward liberty by

the loss of that outward beauty which had been my grief. This view of my condition rendered my soul so well satisfied and so united to God, that it would not have exchanged its condition for that of the most happy prince in the world."

22. "Every one thought I should be inconsolable. Several of my friends came around me, and gave utterance to their regret and sympathy in view of my sad condition. A sad condition, indeed, as it appeared to them; but far from being sad, as it appeared to me. As I lay in my bed, suffering the total deprivation of that which had been a snare to my pride, I experienced a joy unspeakable. I praised God in profound silence. None ever heard any complaints from me, either of my pains or of the loss which I sustained. Thankfully I received every thing, as from God's hand; and I did not hesitate to say to those who expressed their regret and sympathy, that I rejoiced at that in which they found so much cause of lamentation."

23. "When I had so far recovered as to be able to sit up in my bed, I ordered a mirror to be brought, and indulged my curiosity so far as to view myself in it. I was no longer what I was once. It was then that I saw that my heavenly Father had not been unfaithful in his work, but had ordered the sacrifice in all its reality. Some persons, thinking to do me a favor in my supposed affliction, sent me a sort of pomatum, which they said would have the effect to fill up the hollows of the small-pox, and to restore my complexion. I had myself seen wonderful effects from it when tried upon others; and the first impulse of my mind was to test its merits in my own case. But God, jealous of his work, would not suffer it. The inward voice spoke. There was something in my heart, which said, '*If I would have had thee fair, I would have left thee as thou wert.*'"

24. "Fearful of offending God by setting myself against

the designs of his Providence, I was obliged to lay aside the remedies which were brought me. I was under the necessity of going into the open air, which made the hollows of my face worse. As soon as I was able, I did not hesitate to go into the streets and places where I had been accustomed to go previously, in order that my humiliation might triumph in the very places where my unholy pride had been exalted."

25. "During these afflictions the trials which I had experienced in connection with my husband's family, continued. At the commencement of my sickness, I was so much neglected by my mother-in-law, that I was on the point of dying for want of succor. Such was the state of my husband's health at this time, that I was necessarily left, in a great degree, to her care. At the commencement of my attack I needed the immediate aid of a physician; but she would not allow any physician but her own to prescribe for me; and yet she did not send for him for some time, although he was within a day's journey of us. He came at last, when I had providentially received some assistance from another source, and when he could be of but little service to me. In this extremity I opened not my mouth to request any human succor. I looked for life or death from the hand of God, without testifying the least uneasiness at so strange a course of conduct. The peace I enjoyed within, on account of that perfect resignation in which God kept me by his grace, was so great, that it made me forget myself, in the midst of such violent maladies and pressing dangers."

26. "And if it was thus in my sickness, it could not well be expected that my step-mother would exhibit any more favorable dispositions after my recovery. She did not cease at all in her unkind efforts to alienate my husband's affections from me. And now, as God had smitten and taken away whatever there was of beauty in my countenance, he seemed to be more susceptible than ever of any unfavorable

impressions, which others might endeavor to cause against me. In consequence of this, the persons who spoke to him to my disadvantage, finding themselves more listened to than formerly, repeated their attacks upon me more frequently and more boldly. Others changed, but God did not change. Thou only, O my God! didst remain the same. Thou didst smite me without, but didst not cease to bless me within. In augmenting my exterior crosses, thou didst not cease to increase my inward graces and happiness."

27. But the work of God was not yet accomplished. If he had smitten and demolished one dear idol, there were others which remained. God had given her two sons. The eldest was in the sixth year, the youngest in the fourth year of his age. She loved them both; but one was especially the son of her affections. The eldest she could not cease to love; but she loved him with some alternations of feeling, and in deep sorrow. The same causes which operated to disturb and alienate her husband's affections, had their influence here. He had been designedly subjected to a process of training, which resulted in violations of filial duty, and in sad disregard of a mother's love. The second son was not thus injured. Perhaps he had naturally more favorable dispositions. Certain it is, that, in the favorable opening of his young affections and intellect, he filled the measure of a mother's fondness and hopes. Her heart was fixed upon him. But God, who knew on which side danger lay, took her Jacob, and left her Esau.

28. He was seized with the same terrible disease, which had so nearly proved fatal to his mother. "This blow," she says, "struck me to the heart. I was overwhelmed; but God gave me strength in my weakness. I loved my young boy tenderly; but though I was greatly afflicted at his death, I saw the hand of the Lord so clearly, that I shed no tears. I offered him up to God; and said in the language of Job,

"The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be his name."

28. During these successive trials, she recognized the hand that smote her, and blessed it. Her prayer was, that God, in the work of destruction, would take from her entirely the power of displeasing him. "Art thou not strong enough," she exclaimed, "to take from me this unholy duplicity of mind, and to make me one with thyself?" She says that it was a consolation to her to experience the rigors of God. She loved God's justice. She rejoiced in his holy administration, however it might touch and wither all her worldly prospects. She felt that he was right as well as merciful, just as well as good; and that both justice and mercy are to be praised.

It is about this time that we find the first mention of her attempts at poetry. Poetry is the natural expression of strong feeling. She felt, and she wrote. It is possible that she had made attempts of this kind before; but I find nothing said of it. Voltaire, who goes out of his appropriate sphere of judgment in discrediting her religious pretensions, speaks lightly also of her effusions in verse. It would require a more intimate knowledge of French poetical diction than I profess to have, to give an opinion of her poetry, so far as the *expression* is concerned. But I do not hesitate to say, with great confidence, that this portion of her writings, with some variations, undoubtedly, exhibits in a high degree the *spirit* of poetry. There is thought in it; there is feeling. The highest kind of thought, the deepest feeling. The following poem, translated by Mr. Cowper, whom some critics, I think, would not place below Voltaire, either as a writer or judge of poetry, may be regarded as expressive, in some particulars, of her religious experience at this time; and is probably to be referred, in its origin, to this period of her life. It indicates a deep sense of her unworthiness, and a humble and approving resignation to God's will, under the heaviest inflictions of His providence.

DIVINE JUSTICE AMIABLE.

Thou hast no lightnings, O thou Just!
Or I their force should know;
And, if thou strike me into dust,
My soul approves the blow.

The heart, that values less its ease,
Than it adores thy ways,
In thine avenging anger sees
A subject of its praise.

Pleased I could lie, concealed and lost,
In shades of central night;
Not to avoid thy wrath, thou know'st,
But lest I grieve thy sight.

Smite me, O thou, whom I provoke!
And I will love thee still.
The well deserved and righteous stroke
Shall please me, though it kill.

Am I not worthy to sustain
The worst thou canst devise?
And dare I seek thy throne again,
And meet thy sacred eyes?

Far from afflicting, thou art kind;
And in my saddest hours,
An unction of thy grace I find,
Pervading all my powers.

Alas! Thou *sparest* me yet again;
And when thy wrath should move,

Too gentle to endure my pain,
Thou sooth'st me with thy love.

I have no punishment to fear;
But, ah! that smile from thee
Imparts a pang far more severe
Than woe itself would be.

CHAPTER XI.

Faithfulness in trial. Spiritual consolations. General remarks on her experience during the year 1671. *Discharge of domestic and other duties. Trials in relation to her seasons of prayer. Of the faults of which she considered herself guilty at this period. Remarks on a regard for God's providences. Her first acquaintance, July* 1671, *with Francis La Combe. Some account of him. The impression made upon him by her conversations. Her growth in grace. The account she gives of her will, as subdued in its operations, but not wholly renovated in its nature. Remarks on this subject.*

In all the trials which she was thus called to endure, in the afflictions of her own person, and in the loss of her favorite son, it may be said of her, as it was of Job, — who is naturally called to mind by the story of her sufferings, — that *she* "*sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.*" So far, at least, as the occurrences, which have now been mentioned, are concerned, the sincerity of the consecration which she had made of herself and of all her interests to God, had been tried; and through the grace of God it *had not been found wanting.*

2. It is possible, that the suggestion may arise in the minds of some, that God compensated her outward trials by giving an increase of inward consolation. And such was the case, undoubtedly, just so far as he found it necessary and desirable. He never fails, "*to temper the wind to the shorn lamb.*" The hand which afflicted did not allow her to sink

under the blow. And, accordingly, in giving some account of her feelings at this time, she speaks very fully of the supports and consolations she received, although they were mingled with some alternations of feeling, and with some states of inward experience, which she did not then fully understand.

3. "I had a great desire," she says, "for the most intimate communion with God. For this object, my heart went forth in continual prayer. He answered my supplication richly and deeply. The sensible emotion and joy, which I experienced, were sometimes overwhelming. My heart was filled with love, as well as with joy; with that love which seeks another's will, and which is ready to relinquish and sacrifice its own.

4. "But this state of mind did not always continue. At other times, my mind seemed to be dry, arid, '*unemotional;*' and not fully understanding the nature of his dealings with men, it seemed to me at such times that God, being offended for something, had left me. The pain of his *absence* (for such I supposed it to be) was very great. Thinking it to be for some fault of mine that he had thus left me, I mourned deeply,—I was inconsolable. I did not then understand, that in the progress of the inward death, I must be crucified not only to the outward joys of sense, and to the pleasures of wordly vanity, but also, which is a more terrible and trying crucifixion, that I must die to the joys of God, in order that I might fully live to the will of God. If I had known that this was one of the states through which I must pass, in order to experience the full power of sanctifying grace, I should not have been troubled." She had not yet reached that state, (that is to say, permanently and fully, although she had at times some touches of it,) which may be denominated the Prayer of God's will; and which says continually, "I come to do thy will, O God." "It is my meat

and drink to do the will of my heavenly Father." To this blessed will it is true that she was *consecrated;* and that in the fulfilment of this consecrating act, she lay patiently and passively on the altar of sacrifice. But I think it is equally true, that she had not as yet experienced all the results which flow out of such a consecration, when it is attended by full faith, and when God has accomplished his work. As we have already expressed it in another passage, she was fully consecrated *to* the will of God, but had not fully found rest and union *in* the will of God.

5. During the year 1671, the hand of the Lord, considered in comparison with its former dealings, seems to have been staid. God had found her faithful; and her soul, without having entered into the state of permanent rest and union, experienced, amid all her trials, a high degree of inward consolation and peace. She was patient and faithful in the discharge of domestic duties, regular and watchful in her seasons of private devotion, and prompt in performing the duties of kindness and benevolence to others. In intimating that her trials were diminished, as compared with those of the preceding year, we do not mean to say that she was without trials; but, whatever they were, she was greatly supported under them. And I think it may be added, that, both by the griefs she suffered, and by the duties she discharged, and by the supports and consolations which were afforded her, the process of inward crucifixion was continually going on.

6. There were some things, however, even in her course at this time, which she was afterwards led to regard as faults. One thing she mentions, in particular. I give in this instance, however, as well as in others, her meaning, rather than her precise form of expression. It was this. She was more attached to the retirement, the exercises, and the pleasures of devotion, than she was to the efforts, min-

gled as they oftentimes were with temptations and trials, of present and practical duty. As God had not fully taken up his abode in her heart, — which is the only appropriate and adequate corrective of dangers from this source, — she found him, as Christians in that imperfect stage of Christian experience generally do find him, in *particular seasons and places.* And the consequence was, that she not only loved such seasons and places, and sought them very much, which was very proper, but she gives us to understand that she sometimes loved them, and sought them in such a way and to such a degree, *as to interfere with the wants and happiness of others.* It is thus that self-will, the last inward enemy which is subdued, may find a place even in our most sacred things, *but never without injury.*

7. The principle which she adopted, at a subsequent and more enlightened period of her Christian experience, was, that the true place of God, when we speak of God's place any where out of the heart, is *in his Providences.* It is true, indeed, that God's kingdom is in the heart. "The kingdom of God," says the Saviour, "is within you." But it is true also, that he holds his kingdom there, and that he reigns there, in connection with his providences.

8. And as these remarks are made in connection with special times or seasons of devotion, it may properly be added, that the providences of God include both time and place, in the widest sense. So far from excluding times and places, such as are set apart for devotion or for other purposes, they recognize and establish them; but, what is very important, they *hold them also in strict subordination.* These divine providences are in themselves, and emphatically so, the *time of times and the place of places.* And all other times and places, which are approved of God, exist by appointment under them.

9. Undoubtedly, in an important sense of the terms, the

religious man's place is his closet. "Enter into thy closet," says the Saviour, "and pray to thy Father, who seeth in secret." The closet is an indispensable place to him. But whenever he goes there in violation of God's providences, it ceases to be a place of God's appointment, and *he goes there without God.* It should never be forgotten, therefore, that it is God himself, who consecrates the place, and makes it a profitable one. And He will never consent to be jostled out of his true locality, which is always ascertained and designated by His providences, by means of any merely human arrangements. And accordingly we may lay it down as an important practical principle, that the times and places which are erected within the sphere of God's providences, and are in harmony with them, are right and well; and that all other times and places are wrong.

10. "All my crosses," she says, "would have seemed little, if I might have had liberty, in those seasons when I desired it, to be alone and to pray. But my mother-in-law and husband, who acted in concert in respect to my religious exercises, as they did in regard to many other things, restricted me much. The subjection under which I was thus brought, was painful to me, exceedingly so. Accordingly, when it was understood that I had retired for a season of prayer, my husband would look on his watch, to see if I staid above half an hour. He thought that half an hour was enough for that purpose. If I exceeded that time, he grew very uneasy, and complained.

11. "Sometimes I used a little artifice to effect my purposes. I went to him, and asked him, saying nothing of any devotional exercises, if he would grant me an hour, only one hour, to divert myself in some way, or in any way, that might be pleasing to my own mind. If I had specified some known worldly amusement, I should probably have obtained my request. But, as he could hardly fail to see that I

wanted the time for prayer, I did not succeed. He would have granted my request for other diversions; but for prayer he would not.

12. "I must confess that my imperfect religious knowledge and experience caused me much trouble. I often exceeded my half-hour; my husband was angry, and I was sad. But it was I, myself, in part at least, who thus gave occasion for what I was made to suffer. Was it not God, as well as my husband, who placed this restriction upon me? I understood it afterwards, but did not understand it then. I ought to have looked upon my captivity as a part of God's providences and as an effect of His will. If I had separated these things from the subordinate agent, and looked upon them in the true divine light, I might have been contented, I might have been happy. In time I understood these things. When months and years had passed away, God erected his temple fully in my heart. He entered there, and I entered with him. I learned to pray in that divine retreat; and from that time I went no more out."

13. She thought, therefore, with some reason, that at this period of her life she might have failed, in some degree, in her duty to her husband and her family, in consequence of not fully understanding the will of God as developed in his providences. And this view of things perhaps gives a significancy to a remark, which her husband once made, that "she loved God so much that she had no love left for him." It will help to illustrate the source of error and trouble which we are now trying to explain, if we give one or two other facts, which involve the same principle. She had a beautiful garden. And in the time of fruits and flowers, she often walked there. But such was the intensity of her contemplations on God, such "her inward attraction," as she expresses it, that her eye seemed to be closed, and she knew nothing, comparatively speaking, of the outward

beauty which surrounded her. And when she went into the house, and her husband asked her how the fruits were, and how the flowers grew, she knew but little about it. And it was not surprising, I think, that it gave him considerable offence.

14. Again, it oftentimes happened that things were related in the family, which were not without interest, and which were entitled to consideration. The principle of curiosity was awake then, as it is now; and mankind had its history then, as it has now. Others conversed and listened and remembered; but so entirely absorbed was her mind in another direction, that she was scarcely able to do either. And when these topics subsequently came up for remark, although they were entitled to notice, even from a Christian, it was found that she knew nothing of them. This seemed to indicate a want of respect for the feelings of others, if not an obvious disregard of duty. And as she viewed the subject subsequently, and in the light of a higher experience, it seemed to her, that the course which she pursued was erroneous.

15. The highest form (not that which appears to be so, but that which really *is* such) of Christian experience is always in harmony with present duty. It admits no kind of feeling, and no degree of feeling, which is inconsistent with the requirements of our present situation, whatever it may be. The highest love to God does not require us to violate our duty to our neighbor, or even to our enemy. It neither requires us to violate our duty, nor does it do it in point of fact. When our religious experience stops in "emotionality," it is apt to do this; when it but partially controls the desires, it is not always a safe guide; but when, in connection with its other conquests, it breaks down all self-will, and truly establishes the throne of God in the centre of the soul, it does all things right and well; first, by estimating all

things in themselves and their relations just as they ought to be estimated, and then by corresponding to this just estimate by an equally just conduct. To this state she had not as yet fully attained.

16. It is during this period of her personal history, as it is given in her Autobiography, that we first find mention made of Francis de la Combe. As this somewhat distinguished individual is closely connected with a portion of her history, it may be proper to say something of him. He was born at Thonon, a flourishing town of Savoy, situated on the borders of the lake of Geneva.*

In early life he was the subject of religious impressions; and in accordance with his design of devoting himself formally to God in a religious life, he attached himself to the Barnabites, one of the religious Orders in the Catholic Church. He was possessed of a high degree of natural talent, which was improved by a finished education. He was tall and commanding in his personal appearance, and naturally eloquent. Impressed with the importance of religion, he seems to have given his whole heart to God's work. He was frequently employed in religious missions, by those on whom the responsibility of such movements rested in the French church, particularly in the year 1679, and about that time, when he was sent to the province of Chablais, in Savoy, in which his native town, Thonon, was situated. He also labored as a missionary at Annecy, another town of Savoy, situated not far from the city of Chamberry.

17. His labors were not exclusively of an active kind. He published a small treatise, entitled *A Short Letter of Instruction*, in which he endeavors to point out the principles

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* *Relation de L'Origine, du Progrés, et de la Condemnation du Quiêtisme en France, Livre Premiere. — La Vie de Jean D'Aranthon, Evêque de Geneve, Livre iii. chap. iv.*

of growth and of the highest possible attainment in the Christian life. His principal published work was his Analysis of Mental Prayer, *Orationis Mentalis Analysis;* originally written in Latin, and afterwards translated into French.

This work, which inculcates the necessity and the principles of experimental religion in its highest forms, was condemned by the authorities at Rome as heretical. The decree of condemnation is dated the 4th of September, 1688. Some portions of his religious correspondence, also, which possess a high degree of interest, have been preserved. His letters to Madame Guyon are to be found, some of them, in the collections of her writings, and others in the large collection of the Works of Bossuet.* A letter of considerable interest, addressed to M. D'Aranthon, titular bishop of Geneva, is found in the Life of that prelate.

18. His personal activity and influence were such, combined with the influence of his writings, that Louis Fourteenth, who was extremely sensitive to any deviations from the established doctrines of the Romish Church, thought it necessary to shut him up in prison. He was first confined in the chateau of Lourde; he was subsequently transferred to the castle of Vincennes, near Paris, and at a later period was imprisoned in the castle of Oleron, situated in the Isle of Oleron, a place celebrated for having given name to a portion of maritime law, but which derives some portion of its notoriety from the persons who have suffered within the dungeons of its prison. His imprisonments, as I find it stated in one of the writers whom I have consulted, extended through twenty-seven years. His persecutors at last had some pity on him. Just before his death, when body and mind had both been prostrated by his sufferings, he was placed in the Hospital of Charenton. He died in 1714.

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* Œuvres Complètes de Bossuet, Evêque de Meaux, tome 8me

19. It was in June or July of 1671, (she speaks somewhat indefinitely as to the *month*.) that a letter was brought to Madame Guyon from her half-brother, Father La Mothe. The bearer was La Combe, who was then young, but came highly recommended from La Mothe, who wished his sister to see him, and to regard and treat him as one of his most intimate friends. Madame Guyon says, that she was unwilling at this time to form new acquaintances; but desirous of corresponding to the request of her brother, she admitted him. The conversation turned chiefly upon religious subjects. With the clear insight of character which she possessed, she could not fail to become deeply interested in La Combe, as one on whom many religious interests might depend. But still she could not at that time fully decide whether she should regard him as truly a possessor of religion, or as merely a seeker after it. "I thought," she says, "that he either loved God, or was disposed to love him; a state of things which could not fail to interest me, as it was the great desire of my heart that everybody should experience this divine love." As God had already made use of her as an instrument in the conversion of three persons, members of the Religious Order to which he belonged, she indulged the hope that she might be made a benefit to him. And although she says, she felt a reluctance to begin the acquaintance, she now felt a desire to continue it.

20. La Combe left her, but he was not satisfied. Providence had brought him in contact with a mind to which either grace or nature, or both in combination, had given power over other minds. He desired, therefore, to see more and to hear more. And, accordingly, on the basis of the acquaintance which had thus begun, he repeated the visit after a short time. Madame Guyon remarks, that La Combe, who seems to have been a man not only of intelligence but of vivacity and generosity of feeling, was very acceptable to

her husband. On this second visit, he conversed with her husband freely. During the interview, he was taken somewhat unwell; and with the view of recovering and refreshing himself in the open air, he went out and walked in the garden. Soon after, Madame Guyon, at the particular request of her husband, went out for the purpose of seeing him, and of rendering any assistance which might be needed. She availed herself of the opportunity which was thus afforded, to explain to him what she denominates the interior or inward way, "*la voie de l'interieur;*" a way which is inward because it rests upon God, in distinction from the way which is outward, and which rests upon man. He was prepared to receive her remarks, because he inwardly felt the need of that form of experience which was involved in them, and because he perceived, from her countenance, her conversation, and her life, that she possessed that of which he felt himself to be destitute.

21. La Combe always admitted afterwards, that this conversation formed a crisis in his life. Her words, attended by divine power, sunk deep into his soul. It was then, and there, that he formed the purpose, with divine assistance, to be wholly the Lord's. "God was pleased," says Madame Guyon, "to make use of such an unworthy instrument as myself, in the communication of his grace. He has since owned to me, that he went away at that time changed into quite another man. I ever afterwards felt an interest in him; for I could not doubt that he would be a servant of the Lord. But I was far from foreseeing, that I should ever go to the place of his residence." Of La Combe we shall have occasion to speak again hereafter.

22. Whatever mistakes she may have committed in the period of which we are now speaking, it is evident that she was growing in grace. The world had lost, in an increased degree, its power. Her inward nature had become more

conformed to the requisitions of the gospel law. We have evidence of this in various ways. Among other things, speaking of Paris, which had formerly been to her a place of temptation and injury, she remarks, in connection with a visit which she was obliged to make there, "Paris was a place now no longer to be dreaded as in times past. It is true, there were the same outward attractions, the same thronging multitudes; but the crowds of people served only to draw me into deeper religious recollection. The noise of the streets only augmented my inward prayer."

23. She adds, "under the pressure of the daily troubles and afflictions which befel me, I was enabled, by divine grace, to keep my will, O my God! subservient to thine. I could say practically, 'Not my will, but thine be done.' When two well-tuned lutes are in perfect concert, that which is not touched renders the same sound as that which is touched. There is the same spirit in both, the same sound,—one pure harmony. It was thus that my will seemed to be in harmony with God's will.

24. "This was the result of grace. Grace conquered nature; but it was nature in its *operations*, rather than in its *essence*. My will was subdued in its operations in particular cases, so that I could praise the Lord for entire acquiescence; but there still remained in it a secret tendency, when a favorable opportunity should present, to break out of that harmony, and to put itself in revolt. I have since found, in the strange conditions I have been obliged to pass through, how much I had to suffer before the will became fully broken down, annihilated, as it were, not only in its selfish operations but in its selfish tendencies, and changed in its very nature. How many persons there are, who think their wills are quite lost when they are far from it. In hard temptations and trials, they would find that a will submissive is not a will lost; a will

not rebellious, is not a will annihilated. Who is there, who does not wish something for himself; — wealth, honor, pleasure, conveniency, liberty, something? And he who thinks his mind loose from all these objects, because he possesses them, would soon perceive his attachment to them, if he were once called upon to undergo the process of being wholly deprived of them. On particular occasions, therefore, although the will might be kept right in its operations, so as to be in harmony with the divine will, he would still feel the sharp struggle coming out of the will's life; and his consciousness would testify, that he is rendered victorious, moment by moment, only by divine grace."

25. These remarks indicate how closely Madame Guyon marked her inward operations. The reality or fact of the distinction which she makes, between a will submissive or lost in its *operations* and a will lost in its *nature*, is undeniable. The explanation of it is more doubtful. A will *lost*, a will *annihilated*, in the absolute sense of the terms, is an absurdity. A loss of the will in that sense would necessarily imply, not only the loss of moral obligation, but of all moral agency. The explanation, therefore, is in connection with the law of habit. It is a common saying, that habit is a *second nature*. And it is certainly a remarkable fact, that habit will attach to any of our desires, to any of our propensive and affectional principles, (and the same may be said of the will,) a tendency so deep, so controlling, so impulsive, that it has the appearance, as it has all the results, of being an inherent and original part of our mental constitution. It is this terrible tendency, (the penalty we pay for having been so long in sin,) which plants in the path of the penitent and truly regenerated man a thousand dangers, and which is likely, although it will not necessarily prevent his being victorious, to cause him a struggle, more or less severe, at every step which he takes.

26. It is this tendency, which Madame Guyon calls the will's life or nature, in distinction from its mere operations. The will has a false nature, a satanic nature, as well as a true, a divine nature. And it is this false and evil nature, which in the unrenewed and unsanctified man continually shows itself. Its original life, such as it had when it came from the hand of God, it is not necessary to destroy; but it is necessary, indispensably necessary, to destroy all that false and vitiating life, which sin, availing itself of the immense influence of the law of habit, has incorporated so strongly with the will's original nature that they now seem to be one.

27. And hence the distinction, which she properly makes, although it is not often made, between a will subdued and renovated in its *operation*, and the same will, neither subdued nor renovated in its *life*. So that the Christian may properly be said to be victorious over his enemy, when he knows that the enemy, until he has experienced the blessing of sanctification in its highest sense, is still sleeping or watching in his own bosom. What she means to say, therefore, in connection with her experience at the present time, is, that she was made victorious over the will's evil operation, but not over its evil nature; that she was kept from sinning, but that there was yet some unconquered law of her nature, which required her to be always watchful, always praying, always struggling. She kept her enemy at bay, but he was not slain. She was victorious, but still fighting. She was a conqueror, but not at rest. A later period of her experience witnessed a still greater victory.

CHAPTER XII.

Incidents of 1672. *Presentiment of her father's death. A message reaches her soon after with the news of his last sickness. His death. Remarks. Affectionate eulogium on her daughter. Her sickness and death. Reference to the renewed and entire consecration which she had made of herself in the year* 1670. *This act of consecration reduced to writing and signed for the first time, July 22d,* 1672. *Instrumentality of Genevieve Granger in this transaction. Form of this consecrating act or spiritual marriage covenant. Remarks. Dangers connected with a journey taken at this time. Reflections upon it.*

Thus passed the year 1671. I am particular in the periods of time, so far as I am able to ascertain them, which is not always easy to be done. And the reason is, that by connecting the dealings of God and the progress of the inward life with specific times and situations, the mental operation is aided, and we can hardly fail to have a clearer idea of the incidents which are narrated. Another year had now opened upon her, and found her renewedly consecrated to God, and growing wiser and holier through the discipline of bitter experience. Her trials had been somewhat less in this year than in the preceding, but still they were not wholly suspended. And as God designed that she should be wholly his, there were other trials in prospect, which were designed to aid in this important result. We proceed, therefore, in our narrative, with such incidents and facts as we are able to gather from the sources of information found in her own writings and in the writings of some of her contemporaries, which remain to us.

2. It is not always easy to explain the impressions which exist within us. It is very possible, that some remarkable impressions or presentiments may be explained on natural principles; but there are others, of which it might not be easy to give a satisfactory account in that manner. I have been led to this remark, from an incident which I notice in her history. On a morning of July, in 1672, she awoke very early, with such an impression on her mind. "At four o'clock in the morning," she says, "I awoke suddenly, with a strong impression or presentiment that my father was dead. And though at that time my soul had been in very great contentment, yet such was my love for him, that the impression I had of his death affected my heart with sorrow, and my body with weakness."

3. I do not mention this incident, because I think it very important, or because I have any comments to make. It is sufficient to say, that it was not a mere transitory impression, but a presentiment so sudden, so deeply imprinted, so controlling, as to take entire possession of the mind. She was so deeply affected by the conviction of which she was made the subject in this remarkable manner, that she says she could hardly speak.

4. At the time of which we are now speaking, she was not at her own home. She had been residing some days at a Monastery, the Prioress of which was a personal friend. It was some leagues distant from her usual place of residence. She had gone there for religious purposes, as the place was favorable to retirement and to religious contemplation. At the time she left home, her father was residing at her house. It was on the afternoon of the same day in which she experienced the strong presentiment or impression of which we have spoken, that a man arrived at the

Monastery in great haste. He brought a letter from her husband, in which he informed her of her father's dangerous illness. Prompted by affection, as well as by duty, she immediately set out to visit him; but on arriving at her residence, she found him dead.

5. To her father she was tenderly attached. And it would seem, from what we learn of him, that she had reason to be so. "His virtues," she says, "were so generally known that it is unnecessary to speak of them. I pass them in silence; or only with the simple remark, that as he passed through the scenes and trials of his closing days, he exhibited great reliance on God. His patience and faith were wonderful." It was thus that another tie to the earth was sundered; and the freedom of the soul, which is liable to be contracted and shackled even by the domestic affections, when they are but partially sanctified, grew wider and stronger from the bonds that were broken.

6. Another affliction was near at hand. He who gives himself to God to experience under his hand the transformations of sanctifying grace, must be willing to give up all objects, however dear they may be, which he does not hold in strict subordination to the claims of divine love, and which he does not love IN and FOR God alone. The sanctification of the heart, in the strict and full sense of the term, is inconsistent with a divided and wandering affection. A misplaced love, whether it be wrong in its degree or its object, is as *really*, though apparently not as *odiously*, sinful, as a misplaced hatred.

7. She had a daughter, an *only* daughter; young it is true, only three years of age, or but a little more than three years of age; and yet, in her own language, "*as dearly beloved as she was truly lovely.*" "This little daughter," says the mother, "had great beauty of person; and the graces of the body, which distinguished her, were equalled by those of

the mind; so that a person must have been insensible both to beauty and to merit, not to have loved her. Young as she was, she had a perception of religious things; and seems to have loved God in an extraordinary manner. Often I found her in some retired place, in some corner, praying. It was her habit, whenever she saw me at prayer, to come and join with me. And if, at any time, she discovered that I had been praying without her, feeling that something was wrong, or that something was lost, she would weep bitterly, and exclaim in her sorrow, 'Ah, mother, you pray, but I do not pray.' When we were alone, if she saw my eyes closed, as would naturally be the case in my seasons of inward recollection, she would whisper, 'Are you asleep?' and then would cry out, 'Ah, no? You are praying to our dear Jesus;' and dropping on her knees before me, she would begin to pray too.

8. "So strongly did she express her desire and her determination to give herself to the Lord, and to be one with him in spirit, that it gave occasion for reproof on the part of her grandmother. But still she could not be prevailed upon to alter her expressions. She was very dutiful; many were her endearments; and she was innocent and modest as a little angel. Her father doated on her. To her mother she was endeared much more by the qualities of her heart, than by those of her beautiful person. I looked upon her as my great, and almost my only consolation on earth; for she had as much affection for me as her surviving brother, who had been subjected to the most unhappy influences, had aversion and contempt. She died of an unseasonable bleeding. But what shall I say, — she died by the hands of Him, who was pleased to strip me of all." Both her father and daughter died in July, 1672.

9. We have already had occasion to notice, that in the latter part of the year 1670, more than a year and a half

previous to the period of which we are now speaking, she had anew given herself to God, in great sincerity, and, as it seemed to her, without any reserve. By a solemn act, to which God himself was a party, she had placed herself on the altar of sacrifice,—"*the altar which sanctifies the gift*,"—never more to be taken from it. She had left herself with God, both in doing and suffering; and whatever might take place in the fulfilment of his will, she could never wish it to be otherwise. In all the trials to which he had seen fit to subject her, no whisper of complaint, no word of murmur, had ever escaped her lips. But it is worthy of notice, that she had not as yet committed her religious purposes to the formality of a written record. At least, we have no mention of any such thing. It was a mental purpose, communicated to Him who is emphatically MIND; a simple transaction between her soul and God, of which God alone was the witness. It was possible, however, that she might forget, that she might be faithless. There were yet many and heavy trials before her.

10. Her pious and deeply experienced friend, Genevieve Granger, Prioress of the Benedictines, had never ceased to take an interest in her spiritual progress. It is probable that she well understood (and perhaps she was indebted for the views she entertained to the incidents and results of her own past experience) that there were some things in the process of inward crucifixion, some things in what I think may be appropriately termed the "*baptism of fire*," which remained unaccomplished. She did not cease, therefore, in accordance with that direction of Scripture which requires us to "bear each other's burdens," to sympathize in the various trials which Madame Guyon had been called to pass through, to pray for her, and to advise her. Among other things, she wished to add new solemnity and interest to the matter of her consecration; a consecration made on prin-

ciples of an entire and permanent surrender of herself to God, which have already been explained. In carrying her object into effect, she selected as a day especially appropriate to her purpose, the 22d of July, the month in which Madame Guyon had experienced the heavy afflictions of which we have just spoken, although it was not selected on that account.

11. *It was on that day and month, four years before,* after years of inquiry and struggle, that she had first believed on the Lord Jesus Christ in such a manner as to bring into her soul the sense of forgiveness, and to fill it with inward peace. It was, therefore, a day to be remembered with gratitude; as we find that it was remembered through her whole life. Genevieve Granger, in the course of that friendly correspondence which had existed between them for some years, sent word to her, that she wished her to notice the approaching anniversary of that day in a special manner, by acts of worship and by alms. She wished her also to examine, and if she approved of it, to sign what might perhaps be called a marriage covenant with the Saviour, which she had herself drawn up, in very concise terms, for Madame Guyon's use. Perhaps she had in mind that interesting passage of the Scriptures, "The marriage of the Lamb is come; and his wife hath made herself ready; and to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; *for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*" * These suggestions, coming from a source which she had been accustomed greatly to respect, could not fail to be attended to. And especially so, as they corresponded entirely with her own views and feelings. The act or covenant of Consecration, drawn up in accordance with those expressions of Scripture which speak of the church as the bride or spouse of God, with her signature appended, was as follows

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* Rev. xix. 7, 8.

I henceforth take Jesus Christ to be mine. I promise to receive him as a husband to me. And I give myself to him, unworthy though I am, to be his spouse. I ask of him, in this marriage of spirit with spirit, that I may be of the same mind with him,— meek, pure, nothing in myself, and united in God's will. And, pledged as I am to be his, I accept, as a part of my marriage portion, the temptations and sorrows, the crosses and the contempt which fell to him.

Jeanne M. B. De La Mothe Guyon.

Sealed with her ring.

12. This transaction, simple in appearance but carried through with sincere and earnest solemnity of spirit, was much blessed to her. From this time onward, she could not look upon herself as her own, even in that limited and mitigated sense which often characterizes a high state of religious experience. She felt that there was a sanctity in the relation which had thus been voluntarily established, which it would have been the highest impiety, as it would have caused the deepest sorrow, ever knowingly to violate. She had an inward and deeper sense of consecration, both of body and spirit, such as she had not experienced at any time before. God himself has condescended to say, speaking of those who constitute his true people, "I am MARRIED to them." Jer. iii. 14.

13. In examining the record of her life, I find an incident mentioned without date; but from the connection in which it appears, I refer it to this period. "My husband," she says, "and I, took a little journey together, in which both my resignation and humility were exercised; yet without difficulty or constraint, so powerful was the influence of divine grace. We all of us came near perishing in a river, which we found it necessary to pass. The carriage, in passing through the water, sunk in the moving sand at the bottom, which rendered our position very dangerous. Oth-

ers, who were with us, threw themselves out of the carriage, in excessive fright. But I found my thoughts so much taken up with God, that I had no distinct sense of the danger to which we were really exposed. God, to whom my mind was inwardly drawn, delivered me from the perils to which we were exposed, with scarcely a thought on my part of avoiding them. It is true, that the thought of being drowned passed across my mind, but it caused no other sensation or reflection in me than this, — that I felt quite contented and willing that it should be so, if it were my heavenly Father's choice.

14. " It may be said, and perhaps with some reason, that I was rash in not exhibiting more anxiety, and in not making greater effort to escape. But I am obliged to add, in justification of myself, that it is better to perish, trusting calmly in God's providence, than to make our escape from danger, trusting in ourselves. But what do I say? *When we trust in God, it is impossible to perish.* At least it is so in the spiritual sense. *Trust itself is salvation.* It is my pleasure, my happiness, to be indebted to God for every thing. In this state of mind, I cannot fail to be content in the trials which he sees fit to send upon me. In the spirit of acquiescence in God's will, I would rather endure them all my life long, than put an end to them in a dependence on myself."

CHAPTER XIII.

Birth of a son. Her religious state at this period, 1673. *Death of Genevieve Granger. Their intimacy with each other. Remarks on this affliction. General remarks on worldly attachments and supports. Her second visit to the city of Orleans. Interview and conversation with a Jesuit. Remarks upon it. Comments on undue spiritual earnestness or spiritual impetuosity. Writes to a person of distinction and merit for his advice. Withdraws her request. Result, and remarks upon this incident. Marks of distinction between the wholly and the partially sanctified mind. Lawsuit. Her conduct in connection with it. Remarks.*

One of the incidents of the year 1673, to which these series of events now bring us, was the birth of her fourth child, a son, whom Providence had given her in the place of the too much idolized boy, whom she had lost two years before. This son, who seems to have proved himself worthy of her affections, grew up to manhood. But the grace of God enabled her to love him with that pure and chastened affection which holds every thing in subordination to the divine will.

2. At the time of the birth, and during the early period of the life of this child, she speaks of herself as being th subject of great inward support and consolation. Her feelings may perhaps be expressed in the language of the Psalmist,—language, which, in various ages of the world, has found a response in many pious bosoms, "Blessed be the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications. The

Lord is my strength and my shield. *My heart trusted in him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoices; and with my song will I praise him.*"*

3. But this season of consolation was succeeded by a trial unexpected and severe. This was the sickness and death of her religious friend and confidant, Genevieve Granger. To this intelligent and pious woman she had often gone for advice and support, when her way seemed dark, and when her heart was sorrowful. Many were the hours which she had passed with her in religious conversation; and perhaps in some cases she looked to her more, and relied on her more, than was entirely consistent with a simple and unwavering dependence on God alone for wisdom and strength. Perhaps it would not be too much to say, that at this period, and for some years previous, she regarded her, in her trials and her want of experience, as almost indispensable. Certain it is, that she repeatedly mentions it as one of her heavy domestic afflictions, that great efforts were made to prevent her interviews, — the only worldly consolation which seemed to be left to her, — with this pious woman.

4. It increased her affliction, that she was not enabled to be present with her in her last sickness and at the time of her death. She was absent at the time, at a place called St. Reine. Near the close of the life of the Prioress, some one spoke to her in relation to Madame Guyon, with the design, it would seem, of awakening her from a lethargy into which she had fallen. Her mind rallied at a name so dear, and she made the single remark, "I have always loved her *in* God and *for* God." These were her last words. She died soon after.

5. "When I received this news," says Madame Guyon,

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* Ps. xxviii. 6, 7.

"I must confess, that it was one of the most afflicting strokes which I had ever experienced. I could not help the thought, that, if I had been with her at the time of her death, I might have spoken to her, and might have received her last instructions. She had been a great help to me. In some of my afflictions, it is true, I could not see her. Efforts were made to prevent it. This was especially the case for a few months before her death. But still, such was our sympathy of spirit, that the remembrance, — the thought of what she might have said or done, — was a support to me. The Lord was merciful, even in this renewed and heavy affliction. He had taught me inwardly, before her death, that my attachment to her, and my dependence on her, were so great, that it would be profitable for me to be deprived of her." But the necessity of this event, considered in its religious bearings, did not prevent its being keenly painful to nature.

6. Those who experience the crucifixion of nature, in the full extent of those terms, will find it necessary to die to all human attachments, — not in the absolute sense, it is true, because such attachments are undoubtedly right and well in their place; but it will be necessary to die to them, so far, at least, as they imply a reliance and confidence in the creature, which interferes in the least degree with entire reliance upon God. For wise reasons, therefore, God saw fit to take from her this prop.

7. "Oh, adorable conduct of my God!" she exclaims. "There must be no guide, no prop for the person whom thou art leading into the regions of darkness and death. There must be no conductor, no support to the man whom thou art determined to destroy by the entire destruction of the natural life." Every thing upon which the soul rests, *out of God*, must be smitten, whether reputation, or property, or health, or symmetry of person, or friends, or father, or mother, or wife, or husband, or children.

8. *He, who loses his life, shall find it.* Well does she add, "We are found by being lost; we are saved by being destroyed; we are built up by being first demolished. Man erects his inward temple with much industry and care; and he is obliged to do it with such materials as he has. All this structure and superstructure, whatever it may be and to whatever extent it may be carried, is a new modeling and building up of the old Adam. But all this is removed, and cannot be otherwise than removed and destroyed, when God comes into the soul, and builds a new and divine temple, — a temple not made with hands, and of materials which endure forever. Oh, secrets of the incomprehensible wisdom of God, unknown to any besides himself and to those whom he has especially taught, — yet man, who has just begun his existence, wants to penetrate and set bounds to it! Who is it, that hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? It is a wisdom only to be known through death to *self*, which is the same thing as death to every thing that sets itself up in opposition to the true light."

9. I will here mention an incident of a religious nature, which seems to be worth noticing. In the latter part of the year 1763, she visited the city of Orleans a second time, for the purpose of being present at the marriage of her brother. While there, she became acquainted with an individual of the society of the Jesuits, who exhibited some interest in hearing the details of her religious experience. She corresponded to this desire, with much vivacity and very fully. The effort to relate her feelings reacted upon herself, and gave a high degree of sensible satisfaction, in distinction from that satisfaction which results solely from the discharge of duty, — so that she was led to speak of her views and feelings at much length. This conversation, which to most persons would have appeared commendable rather than otherwise, caused her considerable regret afterwards. She

began to see, that, in the progress of religion, it is not only necessary to do the right thing, but to do it *in the right spirit.* The source of her sorrow was, that she found on reflection that she had spoken from the life of nature, not excluding a degree of self-gratulation, which she probably did not perceive at the time,—and not wholly from a single eye to God's glory.

10. "I was too forward," she says, "and free in speaking to him of spiritual things, thinking I was doing well; but I experienced an inward condemnation for it afterwards. The conversation, in itself considered, might not have been objectionable; but the manner of it, or rather the inward spirit of it, was to some degree wrong. And I was so sensible that the spirit of nature, in distinction from the spirit of grace, dictated in part what I said, and was so afflicted at it, that I was kept, with divine aid, from falling into the like fault again. How often do we mistake nature for grace! Sanctification does not necessarily imply a want of earnestness. Far from it. A holy soul, feeling the importance of holiness as no other one can, cannot be otherwise than earnest. But that holy earnestness which comes wholly from God, is entirely inconsistent with the presence and operation of all those influences, whatever they may be, which are separate from God."

11. There is much truth in these views, which we find here and elsewhere in her writings. There is undoubtedly such a thing as spiritual forwardness, (perhaps we may call it religious impetuosity,) which is eminently religious in appearance, but which is sometimes much less truly and purely religious than it seems to be. This state of mind is not, generally speaking, destitute of the religious element; but it is constituted of the religious element, impelled and influenced, in a greater or less degree, *by the natural element.* Eminently religious persons, as they go on from one varia-

tion and degree of inward experience to another, generally pass through this state at some stage of their experience; and it is generally a long time before they can perceive clearly, in opposition to their former views, that it is not the highest and best state. They learn it after a time. They perceive, in the result of their inward teachings, that there is nothing absolutely true and absolutely safe in religion, except what is done in *recollection;* that is to say, which is done deliberately, in the clear perception of the object, and is done conscientiously, in the clear sense of religious duty. He who acts *recollectedly*, and only he, can say with confidence, that he acts with a single eye to God's glory.

12. Another incident, which seems to me to indicate her progress in inward sanctification, may properly be introduced here. "One day," she says, "laden with sorrow, and not knowing what to do, I wished to have some conversation with an individual of distinction and merit, who often came into our vicinity, and was regarded as a person deeply religious. I wrote him a letter, in which I requested the favor of a personal interview, for the purpose of receiving from him some instruction and advice. But reflecting on the subject, after I had written the letter, it seemed to me that I had done wrong. The Spirit of God seemed to utter itself in my heart, and to say, 'What! dost thou seek for ease? Art thou unwilling to bear the Lord's hand, which is thus imposed upon you? Is it necessary to be so hasty in throwing off the yoke, grievous though it be?'

13. "In this state of mind, I wrote another letter to the individual whom I have mentioned, in which I withdrew my request, stating to him that my first letter had been written, I had reason to fear, without a suitable regard to God's providence and will, and partly, at least, from the fearful or selfish suggestions of the life of nature; and as he knew what it was to be faithful to God, I hoped he would not dis-

approve of my acting with this Christian simplicity. I supposed, from the high reputation which he enjoyed as a Christian, that he would have appreciated my motives, and have received this second communication in the Christian spirit in which I hoped it was written.

14. "But, to my surprise, he did not. On the contrary, he resented it highly. And I think we may well inquire, what explanation shall we give of this sort of Christianity? That this person was religious, in the imperfect or mitigated sense of the term, I doubt not. He seems to have been regarded as *eminently* religious; but it is still true, that his religion, whatever may have been the degree of it, was mixed up, pervaded and animated, more or less, on different occasions, with the life and activities of nature. Certain it is, that the life of nature, or that life which has self and not God for its basis, was not wholly slain within him. He could not say, under all circumstances, 'It is well. Thy will be done!'"

15. In connection with the conduct of this individual, she makes some profitable remarks. Referring to the important results which characterize the experience of what she appropriately terms *inward death*, she says, that the soul, which comes out of it in the brightness of the new spiritual resurrection, "is purified from its selfishness, like gold in the furnace, and finds itself clothed in those dispositions and divine states which shone in the nature and life of Jesus Christ. Formerly, although it had submitted itself to God in the matter of its salvation through Christ, it was still proud of its own wisdom, and inordinately attached to its own will; but now, in the crucifixion of nature and in the life of sanctification, it seeks all its wisdom from God, renders obedience with the simplicity of a little child, and recognizes no will but God's will. Formerly, selfishly jealous of what it considered its rights, it was ready to take fire on many occasions

which presented themselves, however unimportant they might be; but now, when it comes in conflict with others, it yields readily and without reluctance. It does not yield, after a great effort and with pain, as if under a process of discipline, but naturally and easily. Formerly, even when it could justly be said to be religious to some extent, it was puffed up at times with more or less of vanity and self-conceit, but now, it loves a low place, poverty of spirit, meekness, humiliation. Formerly, although it loved others, it loved itself more, and placed itself above them; but now, rejoicing equally in the happiness of others, it possesses a boundless charity for its neighbor, bearing with his faults and weaknesses, and winning him by love. The rage of the wolf, which still remained in some degree, and sometimes showed itself, is changed into the meekness of the lamb."

Such are the accurate terms in which she discriminates between the Christian life in its ordinary appearance of partial sanctification, and the same life when it becomes a "new Christ," by experiencing a more full and complete regeneration into the purity, simplicity, and beauty of the divine image.

16. About this time, a matter occurred which illustrates her character in other respects. A certain person, whose name is not given, prompted either by malice or by avarice, attempted, by false pretences, to extort a large sum of money from her husband. The claim, which had the appearance of being one of long standing, was for two hundred thousand livres, which the claimant pretended was due to him from Madame Guyon and her brother conjointly. The claimant was supported in his unjust demand, for what reasons is not known, by the powerful influence of the king's eldest brother, the Duke of Orleans. They tampered with her brother, who was so young and inexperienced as not to understand the merits of the case, in such a manner as to obtain his

signature to certain important papers which were to be used in the trial. They had given him to understand, that, if they succeeded in the establishment of their claim, he should not pay anything.

Madame Guyon felt that a great wrong was about to be done. Her husband, perplexed by the apparent intricacy of the affair, or perhaps terrified by the influence of the Duke of Orleans, was unwilling to contend. And it furnished occasion, without any good reason, for new dissatisfaction with his wife, and for new marks of ill treatment. When the day of trial came, after her usual religious duties, in which we may well suppose that she commended this trying business to divine direction, she says that she felt it her duty to take the unusual course of going personally to the judges, and making her representations of the case before them.

"I was wonderfully assisted," she says, "to understand and explain the turns and artifices of this business. The judge whom I first visited, was so surprised to see the affair so different from what he thought it before, that he himself exhorted me to see the other judges, and especially the Intendant, or presiding judge, who was just then going to the Court, and was quite misinformed about the matter. God enabled me to manifest the truth in so clear a light, and gave such power to my words, that the Intendant thanked me for having so seasonably come to undeceive, and set him to rights in the affair. He assured me, that, if I had not taken this course, the cause would have been lost. And as they saw the falsehood of every statement, they would not only have refused the plaintiff his claim, but would have condemned him to pay the costs of the suit, if it had not been for the position of the Duke of Orleans, who was so far led astray by the plaintiff, as to lend his name and influence to the prosecution. In order to save the honor of the prince, it was decided that we should pay to the plaintiff fifty crowns; so that his claim of two hundred thousand livres was satisfied by the payment of one hundred and fifty. Thus moderately and speedily ended an affair, which at one time appeared very weighty and alarming. My husband was exceedingly pleased at what I had done."

17. We mention this prosecution and the circumstances attending it, not merely as an incident which may properly be regarded as constituting a portion of her life, but as illustrative of character. Independently of the grace of God, which gave to her character its crowning excellence, we have in some incidents of this kind an evidence of what she was by nature; of her clearness of perception, her firmness of purpose, and her eloquence. She had a mind, that was formed by the God who made it to influence other minds. It was only necessary to see her and to hear her, in order to feel her ascendency; not an ascendency which was derived from position, but an ascendency which carried its title in itself; not an ascendency that was assumed, but an ascendency given.

CHAPTER XIV.

1674. *Commencement of her state of privation or desolation. Her account of it. Method of proceeding, in correctly estimating this part of her life. Analysis and explanation of the state into which she had fallen. Joy not religion, but merely an incident to it. Her remarks on the subject. Advice of Monsieur Bertot in relation to her state. Unfavorable results. Advice of another distinguished individual. Unkind treatment which she experienced from him. Correspondence with a Jesuit. Remarks.*

It was in the beginning of the year 1674, (unless perhaps we should assign it near the close of the preceding year, an arrangement which finds something in its favor,) that Madame Guyon entered into what she terms her state of *privation or desolation.* It continued, with but slight variations, for something more than six years.

2. Her experience at this time was in some respects peculiar, so much so as to require explanations at some length, both to make it understood in itself, and to make it in some degree profitable to others. "I seemed to myself cast down," she says, "as it were, from a *throne of enjoyment*, like Nebuchadnezzar, to live among beasts, — a very trying and deplorable state, when regarded independently of its relations, and yet exceedingly profitable to me in the end, in consequence of the use which Divine Wisdom made of it. Considered in comparison with my former state of enjoyment, it was a state of emptiness, darkness, and sorrow, and went far beyond any trials I had ever yet met with."

3. In giving an account of this portion of her life, a

person would be likely to make mistakes, if he proceeded without a careful comparison of the statements made in different parts of her writings. If suitable care is taken in this respect, there will be found to be no difficulty, I think, in giving a correct view of it. Looking at the subject with the aids which are thus afforded us, we proceed, therefore, to say, that the privation or desolation, which she speaks of, particularly in its incipient state, was not a privation of desire, of hope, and of holy purpose; but of *sensible* consolations. The Christian life, in the highest sense of the terms, is a *life of faith.* This is generally admitted and understood; but it does not appear to be equally well understood, that to live by emotions, to draw our activity and our hope from sensible joys, is to live by *sight* rather than by faith. Joy is not life; but merely an incident of life.

4. God designed to make her his own, in the highest and fullest sense; he wished her to possess the true life, the life unmingled with any element which is not true; in other words, a life which flows directly and unceasingly from the divine nature. And in order to do this, it became with Him, if we may so express it, a matter of necessity, that He should take from her every possible inward support, separate and distinct from that of unmixed, naked faith. "We walk by *faith*," says the apostle, "and not by sight." 2d Cor. v. 6, 7. And again, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Galat. ii. 20.

5. Accordingly, He so ordered it in his providences, that those inward consolations, which had hitherto supported her so much in her trials, should be taken away; except those which are based upon the exercise of pure or simple belief in the divine word and character. The joys which arise from this source, although they may temporarily be perplexed and diminished by counteracting influences, arise by

a necessary and unchangeable law, and can never fail to exist. But a large portion of her inward consolations, as is generally the case at this period of religious experience, arose from other causes and in other ways, connected in some respects and to some extent, it is probable, with the faith she possessed, but not directly based upon it. All this God saw fit to take away. And not making the proper distinctions in the case, and estimating her situation more by what she had lost than by what she retained, it seemed to her, that *all* peace, that *all* consolation, whatever cause or source it might arise from, was gone. So far as joy was concerned, her heart was desolate.

6. And this was not all. In this state of things, she committed the great mistake of looking upon the absence of joy as evidence of the *absence of the divine favor.* After mentioning that she was left without friends and other sources of consolation, she adds, "to complete my distress, *I seemed to be left without God himself*, who alone could support me in such a distressing state." That is to say, if I rightly understand her meaning, finding that her joys were gone, which had been as a sort of sunlight to her soul, she drew the conclusion, that God was gone. I am ready to concede that the mistake was an easy and perhaps a natural one, but it was none the less a mistake; a mistake vital in its principle and terrible in its consequences. The reader will notice, that since the time she had consecrated herself to the Lord to be wholly his, in the full and absolute sense of the terms, God had been pursuing a course which was wisely adapted to secure her whole heart to himself. He had tried her sometimes in one direction and sometimes in another, and through grace had found her faithful. But during all these trials it will be noticed that she was sustained, with the exception of a few short intervals, by inward consolations. There was, generally speaking, a high state of pleas-

ant and frequently of joyous emotionality. So that, instead of living upon "every word which proceeds from God's mouth," in other words, instead of living upon God's will, which, more appropriately than anything else, may be called angels' food, and which, whatever mày be thought to the contrary, is and can be the only true bread of life, she was living upon her *consolations.* Strange it is, that we find it so difficult to perceive, that the joys of God are not God himself.

7. It is true, undoubtedly, that we may enjoy the will of God in the joys of God; that is to say, while we may take a degree of satisfaction in the consolations themselves, we may rejoice in them chiefly and especially as indicative of the divine will. But in the earlier periods of Christian experience, we are much more apt to rejoice in our joys, than to rejoice in *the God of our joys.* The time had come, in which God saw it necessary to take away this prop on which she was resting, in some degree at least, without knowing it.

She could love God's will, trying though it often was to her natural sensibilities, when it was sweetened with consolations. But she was now called to endure another and a deeper trial. The question now proposed to her was, whether she could love God's will, when standing, as it were, alone, when developing itself as the agent and minister of divine providences which were to be received, endured, and rejoiced in, in all their bitterness, simply because they were from God.

8. This was a question, which, under the circumstances of the case, could not well be tested, except in connection with that state of inward aridity, to which we have referred; a state, which, *in itself considered*, cannot properly be designated as painful and still less as condemnatory, but which is sometimes described as a lifeless or *dead* state; that is to say, dead, not in the sense of being without religion, but dead in respect to a particular kind or class of emotions; a

state which is without life in the sense of its being *unemotional.*" In other words, joyous emotions have either ceased to exist, or their natural results are overruled by influences originating in feelings of a different character. God's hand is in this result; and it is well that it should be so. As men may make a God of their own intellect, by being proud of their intellect; or may make a God of their own will, by being proud of their will; so they may make a God of their joyous emotions, by taking a wrongly placed pleasure in them. And just so far as this is the case, it is proper for God, in the exercise of his gracious administration, to take away such emotions. He turns their channels back; he smites our earthly delights, and opens the sources of providential sorrow, and overwhelms them, and they disappear. And in doing this, he does not take away men's religion, but rather takes away an idol; or if that term be too strong, he certainly takes away that, whatever we may name it, which perplexes and injures religion.

9. But this is a subject, which involves so nice an analysis of the mental operations, that I think we may properly delay upon it a moment longer. When we speak of the necessity of an inward life, which is separate in its foundation or basis from emotions, we do not mean *all* emotions. We have particular reference, as the reader may have already noticed, to *joyous* emotions; and we do not mean *all of them.* We ought to add, therefore, in order not to be misunderstood, that the emotions which may safely and sometimes profitably be taken away, are emotions in *the wrong place;* and this remark will be the better understood, when we add further, that religion, considered in its element or foundation principle, consists in faith in God and in those desires and purposes which naturally flow out of such faith. This is the true religious life.

10. Emotions (we speak now of *joyous* emotions, and not

of any other) are the incidents or attendants of this life, and not the life itself; and accordingly all those joyous emotions which *precede* the life, are not the life, although sometimes mistaken for it. *Faith*, at least, must go before. Whenever we have pleasant emotions in God, before we have faith in God, it must be a God of our own making; such an one as those false gods that are described by the Psalmist, "*the work of men's hands*,"* and who are as feeble as those who trust in them; and we build, therefore, upon a sandy foundation. And whenever such emotions, (those which go before faith, and also those which are not founded upon it,) interfere with, and perplex the life of faith, God acts wisely and kindly in taking them from us.

11. We hope we shall not be understood, in these remarks, as denying or doubting the existence of true Christian joy. Certain it is, that there are true joys, joys which God approves, *joys of faith* as well as other joys. And we may add, I think, with great confidence, that these joys exist by a *necessary law*. He, who has faith, has the *joys of faith;* and what is more, *he cannot help having them.* And not only this, he may justly regard them as an evidence or *sign* of a good religious state. And as such *a sign* he may rejoice in his joys, as well as in the object of his joys, if he will be careful to do it cautiously and wisely. I repeat, that we may properly and safely make the joys of faith a distinct subject of contemplation, and may rejoice in them to some extent, as *a sign* of that, whatever it is, which is the foundation or basis of them, — namely, the thing signified or substance. But whenever by an inward process, which not unfrequently exists, although it is difficult to explain it, we rejoice in the joys of faith in *themselves*, and not as a *sign*, instead of rejoicing in the *objects of faith*, such

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* Ps. cxv. 4—8.

as God, God's inherent goodness and holiness, God's promise, and the like, caring in reality nothing about God and his approbation, but only about the *happiness* he gives, thus placing the gifts before the GIVER, our experience is entirely upon a wrong track, and will result soon, if it continue thus, in the destruction of faith itself.

12. In the case of Madame Guyon, it is very true, that the joys of faith, sometimes more and sometimes less, remained with her amid all her trials. But the joy which she took *in her joy*, in distinction from the joy which she took in the *God* of her joy, and also all other joys which were not founded in faith, and which she rested in instead of God, who is the great object of faith, were taken away. And so great was the change, although ordered in the greatest mercy on the part of God, that she seemed to be like one smitten, cast out, and hopelessly desolate; like Nebuchadnezzar, as she expresses it, who was suddenly deprived of his power and his glory and dwelt among the beasts of the field. Sad condition, as it seemed to her; and in some respects, undoubtedly, it was very trying. Especially when she regarded it as an evidence, as she did, that she had committed some aggravated sins, although she did not understand what they were, and that God was displeased with her on account of them. Having lost her consolations, she supposed, as we have already intimated, that she had lost all. Not being happy, or at least not being so happy as she had been, she concluded that she was not a Christian, or at least not so much a Christian as she had been. And this impression reacted upon her own mind, and rendered her more unhappy still, and tended to increase the sad conviction, that she had in some manner grievously offended God.

13. She herself subsequently understood this. "I have learned," she says, in words to this effect, "from this season of deprivation, that the prayer of the heart, the earnest

desire and purpose of the soul, to be and to do what the Lord would have us, — when, in consequence of not being attended with excited and joyous emotion, it appears most dry and barren, — is nevertheless not ineffectual in its results, and is not to be regarded as a prayer offered in vain. And all persons would assent to this, if they would only remember, that God, in answering such a prayer, gives us what is best for us, though not what in our ignorance we most relish or wish for. If people were but convinced of this great truth, far from complaining all their life long, they would regard the situation in which God sees fit to place them, as best suited to them, and would employ it faithfully in aiding the process of inward crucifixion. And hence the afflictive incidents attending upon such a situation, in causing us inward death, would procure the true life. It is a great truth, wonderful as it is undeniable, that all our happiness, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, consists in one thing, namely, in resigning ourselves to God, and in leaving ourselves with Him, to do with us and in us just as he pleases.

14. "When we arrive at this state of entire and unrestricted dependence on God's Spirit and providence, we shall then fully realize, that what we experience is just what we need, and that if God is truly good, he could not do otherwise than he does. All that is wanting is, to leave ourselves faithfully in God's hands, submitting always and fully to all his operations, whether painful or otherwise. The soul must submit itself to be conducted, from moment to moment, by the divine hand; and to be annihilated, as it were, by the strokes of His providence without complaining, or desiring anything besides what it now has. If it would only take this course faithfully, God would be unto it, not only eternal Life, but eternal Truth. We should be guided into the truth, so far as it might be necessary for us,

although we might not fully understand the method of its being done.

15. "But the misfortune," she adds, "is, that people wish to *direct God*, instead of resigning themselves to *be directed by him*. They wish to take the lead, and to follow in a way of their own selection, instead of submissively and passively following where God sees fit to conduct them. And hence it is, that many souls, who are called to the enjoyment *of God himself*, and not merely to the *gifts of God*, spend all their lives in pursuing and in feeding on little consolations; resting in them as in their place of delights, and making their spiritual life to consist in them."

16. These remarks were written many years after the period of her life, to which our attention is now particularly directed; written, it would seem, to her surviving children, after she had been the subject of persecution and of imprisonment for the Gospel's sake. And this explains what immediately follows. "For you, my dear children," she adds, "if my chains and my imprisonment any way afflict you, I pray that they may serve to engage you to seek *nothing but God for himself alone*, and never to desire to possess him but by the death of your whole selves. Never, as the children of God, seek to be anything in your own ways and life; but rather to enter into the most profound nothingness."

17. But at this time, as I have said, all seemed to her to be gone. And what had a tendency to confirm her the more in these desponding views, was the course taken by some individuals, in whose opinions in respect to her religious state, she naturally placed a considerable degree of confidence. I refer in this remark, in part, to the mistaken but well meant course of Monsieur Bertot, a man of learning and piety, whom, in accordance with the practice of her church, and at the suggestion of her friend, Genevieve Granger, she had some time before selected as her spiritual

Director. It was proper, therefore, that she should consult him. She went to Paris for this purpose, where he resided. But embarrassed by the peculiarity of her situation, he seems to have mistaken almost entirely its true nature. His advice was, if we correctly understand the statements made on the subject, that she should begin anew her religious efforts by practising those incipient methods of religious reading and prayer, which were calculated to make a religious impression, just as if she had either not known what religion was, or did not now possess it.

18. This advice she was not disposed to receive, because there was something in her which seemed to tell her, that it was mistaken advice, and was not applicable to her case. The consequence was, that Bertot, who was a conscientious man, thinking that some other person might be more judicious, or more successful, as her spiritual counsellor, wrote to her that he wished to resign the office which he sustained as her Director. This course, on the part of one in whom she had so much confidence, made a deep and unfavorable impression on the mind of Madame Guyon. She says, "I had no doubt that God had revealed to him, that I had become a transgressor; and that he regarded the state of inward aridity and desolation into which I had fallen, as a certain mark of my reprobation."

19. She mentions another individual, who, if we may judge from some intimations which are connected with this reference to him, was probably one of the sect or party of the Jansenists; a party which at that time possessed much influence in France; and which, as it well deserved to be, has since been historically celebrated. "He was a man," she says, "who held a high position in the church; polite in his manners, obliging in his temper, and who had a good share of talent." Pleased with Madame Guyon, and desirous to bring her into harmony with himself on some points

of religious doctrine in which they seem to have differed, he often visited her house. This intimacy was after a time broken off, and he added himself to the number of those, who at this time formed and expressed unfavorable opinions in regard to her state.

20. "The inability," she says, "I was now in, in consequence of my discouragements and depression, of doing those exterior acts of charity I had done before, served this person with a pretext to publish that it was owing to him, and under his influence and advice that I had formerly done them. Willing to ascribe to himself the merit of what God alone by his grace had enabled me to do, he went so far as to make a distinct allusion to me in his sermons, as one who had once been a bright pattern in religious things to others, but now had lost my interest in them, and had become a scandal. I myself have been present at such times, and what he said, noticed and understood as it was by others, was enough to weigh me down with confusion. I received what he said, however, with submission and patience, believing as I did that God was offended with me, and that I abundantly merited much worse treatment.

21. "Confused, like a criminal, that dares not lift up his eyes, I looked upon the virtue of others with respect. I could see more or less of goodness in those around me, but in the obscurity and sorrow of my mind I could seem to see nothing good, nothing favorable in myself. When others spoke a word of kindness, and especially if they happened to praise me, it gave a severe shock to my feelings, and I said in myself, they little know my miseries; they little know the state from which I have fallen. And on the contrary, when any spoke in terms of reproof and condemnation, I agreed to it as right and just.

22. "It is true, that nature wanted to free herself from this abject condition, but could not find out any way. If I

made an effort, if I tried to make an outward appearance of righteousness by the practice of some good thing, my heart in secret rebuked me as guilty of hypocrisy, in wanting to appear what I was not. And God, who thought it best that I should suffer, did not permit any thing of this kind to succeed. Oh, how excellent are the crosses of Providence. All other crosses are of no value.

23. "I was often very ill and in danger of death; and darkness brooded upon the future as well as upon the present; so that I knew not how to prepare myself for that change, which sometimes seemed near at hand. Some of my pious friends wrote to me, requesting an explanation of some things, which the gentleman, whom I have mentioned, spread abroad concerning me; but I had no heart to justify myself, and did not undertake to do it, although I knew myself innocent of unfavorable things which were said. One day being in great desolation and distress, I opened the New Testament, and chanced to meet with these words, which for a little time gave me some relief. *My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.*"

24. Even the pious Franciscan, whom God had employed as an instrument in effecting the great moral and religious change, which she experienced in the year 1668, was perplexed about her case, and was incapable of giving her any profitable advice. With this individual she had for the past five or six years kept up an occasional correspondence at his request. In this season of her inward deprivation and sorrow, of which he had learnt the particulars, she received from him a letter which tended to increase the discouragement she already experienced, and to add keenness to her pangs.

25. Another individual, a member of the religious association of the Jesuits, who had formerly held her piety in high estimation, "wrote to me," she says, "in a similar strain."

"No doubt," she adds, in the spirit of that invaluable habit which she had of referring all things to God, "it was by the divine permission, that they thus contributed to complete my desolation. Discovering in their letters kind feelings, I thanked them in my reply to their communications, for the Christian and friendly interest which they had taken in me, and commended myself to their prayers. It was painful to be thus unfavorably estimated by those who had the reputation of being people of piety; but there was a greater pain, which, on the principle of contrast, made this pain appear to be less. I refer to the deep sorrow I had experienced in connection with the thought of having displeased God."

26. These facts, illustrative of the opinions of others in relation to her spiritual state, show us, how little dependence we can safely place on mere human judgments. On the principle on which these persons judged Madame Guyon, what would have been thought of hundreds and thousands of Christians, the most eminent for their devotedness to God, who have been inwardly and outwardly afflicted? What would have been thought of the Saviour himself, persecuted, buffeted, amazed, weeping, and dying on the cross? We ought not to forget, that here on earth Christianity is on the battle-field of its trials, — trials which are often doubtful in their issue, — and not in the victorious repose of the New Jerusalem. It may conquer, it is true; and it may "enter into rest;" but this does not imply, that the enemy will not renew the contest, and that the rest will not be disturbed. We conquer in our armor; and here on earth at least, we must rest, so far as rest is given us, *with our armor on.*

CHAPTER XV.

Events of the year, 1676. *Sickness of her husband. His traits of character. Affecting incident resulting in their mutual reconciliation. His pious dispositions near the close of his life. His death. Occupied in the settlement of her estate. Chosen as judge or arbiter in a lawsuit. Result. Reference to her inward dispositions. Separation from her mother-in-law. Remarks.*

THIS state of things had continued for nearly two years. Years do not pass, nor even days, without their character and their incidents; and generally the incidents which help to characterize them, are very various in their aspect; sometimes bright with joy, but not less frequently stained and dark with sorrow.

The physical infirmities of her husband increased; and it seemed to be obvious, that the end of his life was rapidly approaching. We shall delay upon him for a few sentences; and shall have occasion to speak of him no more.

2. He seems to have been a man of considerable powers of intellect, of energy of character, and of strong passions. He was too high-spirited and proud, not to be jealous of his own rights, and of his personal position and influence. He both loved and hated strongly; but both his love and his hatred were characterized by sudden alternations of feeling, which can be explained, in part, in connection with that trait of quicksighted jealousy, which has been mentioned. His feelings towards his wife were of a mixed character. She says of him expressly, notwithstanding the trials she expe-

rienced at his hand, "he loved me much. *When I was sick he was inconsolable.*" And she adds, making an exception undoubtedly of certain individuals, who had insidiously obtained a control over him, "whenever he heard of other persons having made unfavorable remarks in relation to me, he felt it keenly, and expressed himself in terms of exceeding indignation. And I have great confidence, if it had not been for the unpropitious influence of his mother and the maid-servant whom I have mentioned, we should have been very happy in each other. Faults he had undoubtedly. And most men, I suppose, have some defects of character, some undue passions; and it is the duty of a reasonable woman to bear them peaceably, without irritating them by unkind or unsuitable opposition." *

3. That he loved her, therefore, there can be no doubt. But his affection, which was marked and passionate, was modified by a sense of intellectual inferiority, as compared with his wife in that respect, which was humbling to his pride. This, probably, was one source of irritation. Add to this the disparity of their age, and the benevolence of heart which characterized the one, and the habits of parsimony and acquisition, bordering perhaps upon avarice, which seemed to characterize the other. Again, the one was religious, a seeker of religion when she married, and soon afterwards a possessor of it. The other was without religion in experience, although he seems always to have had some respect for it. The one loved God, the other loved the world. It is not surprising, therefore, that his mother, a woman of art and energy, availing herself of these sources of distrust and repugnance, should have been successful in diminishing his affections for his wife, and for some short periods of time, in totally perverting them.

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* La Vie de Madame Guyon, ch. 6.

4. When left to himself, he acknowledged and felt his wife's ascendency. His pride in her, when it was permitted to take that direction, added strength to his affection; and at such times he gave no ground of complaint by withholding the testimonies of confidence and love. But exposed as he was to powerful influences, constantly operating upon that spirit of jealousy which seems to have been a strong characteristic, he was at times less true to duty and affection than he would otherwise have been. And on some occasions, driven to a sort of madness of exasperation, originating from the sources of influence which have been mentioned, combined with the goadings of physical suffering, he was unjust and cruel in a high degree. But it is some satisfaction to know, that he had perception enough left, and love enough left, to estimate and acknowledge the wrong in his better moments. It was at such a time, and in such a spirit, that he made some conciliatory remarks to her some years before, in his journey to St. Reine. "He appeared very desirous," she says, "of having me attend him, and was not willing to have any other besides me. And he made the remark, referring to those who had afflicted me, if they were not in the habit of speaking against you, I should be be more satisfied and easy, and you would be more happy."

5. As the clouds were gathering over him, and the sun of his life seemed about to be setting, Madame Guyon felt that she could no longer consistently or rightly submit to an interference even on the part of one, who sustained the relation of his mother, which had been attended with such unhappy results. She asserted her rights with dignity and decision, as she might have done without any failure of propriety at a much earlier period. Feeling that at this solemn crisis there should be a full reconciliation between herself and her husband, and that what remained of life to them

should be spent in a different manner, uninfluenced and unmarred by others, she approached the matter of their differences, not merely in the spirit of a woman and a wife, but in that also of a Christian.

6. "I took some favorable opportunity," she says, "and drawing near his bed, I kneeled down; and admitting in what I said to him, that I probably had done things which had displeased him, I assured him, however, that I had not wronged him in any case deliberately and intentionally. And, for whatever I had done amiss, under whatever circumstances, I now begged his pardon. He had just awoke from a sound sleep. Strong emotions appeared deeply marked upon his countenance, as I uttered these words. He said to me, 'It is I who have done wrong rather than yourself. It is I who beg *your* pardon. I did not deserve you.'"

7. He seems from this time to have had his eye fully open to the arts which had been practised upon him. He felt that he, who assumes the responsibility of coming between husband and wife, and of disturbing their happiness by alienating their affections, does an evil not more terrible in its results, than it is malicious and morally reprehensible in its character. It was her privilege to watch at his bedside during the remainder of his days; to wipe away the drops of anguish from his brow; and to speak words of Christian consolation to his dying heart. And she did this, when her own soul was inwardly tried by the deepest fears and sorrows.

8. It is hardly necessary to say, that this kindness of attention, and these instructions and advice must have been no small privilege to a man in his situation. It is true, that she advanced much afterwards in the knowledge of the Scriptures and in Christian experience; but even at this

time, and with all the perplexities and sorrows which weighed down her own mind, there can be no doubt, that her sympathy, her advice, and her prayers were of unspeakable value. On a dying couch, when it is emphatically true that we live not by bread alone, but by spiritual nourishment, by the Word, and by the consolations of the Holy Ghost, such a friend and adviser may justly be regarded as a special gift of Heaven.

9. For twenty-four days immediately preceding his death, she scarcely left his bed-side. The alleviation of physical suffering was not the only result of her watchings and labors. God was pleased to bless them also to his spiritual good. In his last days, — important days to him, — when all earthly prospects grew dark, the light of religion began to open its dawning in the soul. In the mild radiance of that light, feeble though it was, because it was in its beginning, he died. He was resigned and patient in his sickness; and died, so far as could be judged, in the exercise of truly Christian dispositions, after having received the sacramental element in a humble and edifying manner. His death took place on the morning of the 21st of July, 1676. "I was not present," she says, when he expired. "Out of tenderness to me, he had requested me to retire."

10. It was thus that her own person had been smitten; and that within a few years she had seen her beloved son and daughter taken from her, and her father and her husband also, after short intervals of time, laid in the grave. And she was a woman whose heart, from its first young beat to its dying throb, gushed out with sensibility. This was one of the marked traits of her character, which existed naturally almost in excess. No daughter loved her parents more tenderly than she did; no mother possessed more depth and sacredness of maternal affection; no wife appreciated more fully the sacred nature and the value of the

conjugal relation. But of those who sustained these invaluable relations, how many were gone! Like summer flowers, or like leaves of autumn, they had fallen on her right hand and left. She stood alone; smitten within as well as without; and without a single friend to console her. But did she repine? Did she indulge in a murmuring spirit?

11. In all this we do not hesitate to repeat again, that it could be said of her, as it was said of the ancient Patriarch, who was tried by a long series of outward and inward afflictions, "*in all this she sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.*" Or if these expressions should be regarded by any as too strong, they can be applied, in some approximated sense at least. So far from complaining and rebelling, she knew well the hand of the Lord; and her soul did not hesitate a moment to bow in submission before it. It was not the sullenness of despair, which yields because it cannot do otherwise; but the calmness of Christian submission and hope. She could say with the Psalmist, in allusion to the ties of earth which had been separated, however painful the process was to the natural affections, "*O, Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid; thou hast loosened my bonds; I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.*" * This was the passage of Scripture, she informs us, which particularly occurred to her mind in connection with these events. She knew, whatever trials might exist here, that there was a hidden mercy concealed beneath them; and that a rest, pure and permanent, remains for the people of God.

12. She was twenty-eight years of age, when she was thus left a widow; having been married twelve years and four months. Having buried two of her children at an early period of their lives, she was now left, at the commencement

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* Ps. cxvi. 16, 17.

of her widowhood, with three others; the two sons, who have already been mentioned, and an infant daughter, born but a few months before the death of her husband. This daughter, who was given her to take the place of that earlier and lost one, whom she so dearly loved and so deeply lamented, grew up to womanhood, and became by marriage the Countess of Vaux. Her husband was son of the celebrated comptroller, Fouquet, of whom we have some notice in Voltaire's Life of Louis Fourteenth, and who is frequently mentioned in the writers of that period.

13. God may be regarded, in a special sense, as the friend and father of the widow and the orphan. Many are the passages of Scripture, which express the deep interest he takes in those who are in this trying situation. "The Lord," says the Psalmist, "preserveth the stranger, and *relieveth the fatherless and the widow*."* True, indeed, it was, that the aspects of Providence, in many respects, were dark before her, both within and without. But it is equally true, that God did not desert her; and that, in his goodness, which does not "willingly grieve and afflict the children of men," he could not desert her, in her new and sorrowing state. Nor, on the other hand, though she was sometimes heavily tempted, could it be said with propriety or truth, that she deserted God. She could say with the apostle, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair. Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our body."† Unshaken in her Christian integrity, true to the altar of sacrifice on which she had placed herself, her first and great inquiry now, as it had been in times past, was, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do"?

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* Ps. cxlvi. 9. † 2d Cor. iv. 8, 9, 10.

She seemed to have an inward conviction, that the time had nearly come in God's providence, when she would be enabled to devote herself exclusively to the cause of religion. But she knew that God does not require of us duties which are contradictory in their nature; and that her first cares and labors, under the existing circumstances, were especially due to her family.

14. The administration of a large estate devolved, in a considerable degree, upon herself; a duty to which she did not consider it inconsistent with religious obligation to give all suitable attention. This was the first business to which Providence, whose indications she regarded with great care, seemed to lead her. She says, "I had received no training in matters of business, and was in a great degree ignorant of them. But being called in the divine providence to attend to this matter, I received from God that strength and wisdom, which were necessary for the occasion. I believe that I omitted nothing, which it was necessary or proper for me to do. I arranged all my husband's papers; I paid all the legacies which he required to be paid; and did all without assistance from any one, excepting always that divine assistance, which God never failed to give me, whenever he imposed any special burden."

15. "My husband," she adds, "had a large amount of writings and papers of various kinds left with him, to which other persons had a right. These also required my attention. I took an exact inventory of them; and had them sent severally to their owners, which, without divine assistance, would have been very difficult for me; because, my husband having been a long time sick, everything was in the greatest confusion. This circumstance, which naturally arrested the attention of the persons to whom the papers were sent, gained me the reputation of a woman of skill in business, a reputation to which I regarded myself as having

but very little claims. Another affair, which occurred at this time, added to this favorable impression."

16. The affair to which she alludes, was the following. There were a number of persons in the neighborhood where her husband resided, who fell into a dispute in relation to a piece of property. And not being able to settle the difficulty among themselves, they chose, rather than to bring it before the courts, to refer it to him for his decision. As he was acquainted with most of these persons, and had a particular esteem for some of them, he took charge of the business, although it was not very appropriate to his situation and his mental habits. There were no less than twenty-two persons more or less concerned in this affair, which rendered it one of considerable delicacy and perplexity. Either for want of time, or distrusting his ability to settle the dispute alone, he employed some persons skilled in the law, to assist him in the examination of the papers, which were laid before him, and to aid him in forming a just opinion. It was at this stage of the business that he died.

17. "After his death," she says, "I sent for the persons who were concerned, and proposed, as I had done in other cases, to return them their papers. They were troubled. They anticipated the greatest evils, and perhaps the ruin of some of their number, if a settlement of the difficulties could not be had. In this state of things they proposed to me to take the place of my deceased husband, and to act as judge between them. A proposition, apparently so impracticable and absurd, could not have been entertained for a moment, had it not been for the urgency and the real necessities of the parties concerned. This gave to the proposition the aspect of a Christian duty. I laid it before the Lord; and relying on His strength and wisdom, felt it my duty to try. I found it necessary to give my mind fully to the business, which I had thus, as it seemed to me with the divine approbation,

voluntarily assumed. And accordingly, laying aside all other business, I shut myself up in my closet about thirty days, not going out at all except to my meals and to religious worship. All this time was necessary, in order to understand the merits of the case. I at length completed the examination, formed my final opinion upon the subject, and drew it up in writing. The parties were summoned together; and without reading it or knowing what my decision was, they accepted it and signed it. I afterwards learned that they were so well pleased with what I had done, that they not only commended it much, but published it abroad everywhere. The hand of the Lord was in it. It was God who gave me wisdom. So ignorant was I then, and so ignorant am I now, of affairs of this nature, that when I hear persons conversing about them, it appears to me like Arabic."

18. At this period, and during a number of succeeding years, her life, considered in its outward relations, was retired, domestic, and in many respects quiet. The time had not come, which was destined to open to her the path of more public duty. *Inwardly* she was still desolate. In what sense this remark is to be understood, we have already explained. She was without that experience of inward joy which had once supported her. But in saying that she had lost her joy, we do not mean to say that she had lost her God. She was desolate to the eye of sense only, and not to the eye of faith. But this she did not as yet understand. To *her* the desolation appeared complete. Her sorrow was unappeasable. But though it seemed to her that God had left her, she acknowledged fully the rectitude of all His dealings, and felt that she could not leave *Him*. She followed him in tears; like the Samaritan woman, whose faith the Saviour tried so keenly by calling her, by implication at least, in the exclusive and rude form of expression, which the Jews applied to

the people of other nations, a *dog;* and who gave the memorable answer, which the same Saviour has left on record for the world's admiration in all coming time, "*Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their master's table.*" *

19. After the death of her husband, she made some attempts towards a reconciliation with her mother-in-law. On the following Christmas day, in particular, she approached her, and said to her with much affection, "My mother, on this day was the King of Peace born. He came into the world to bring peace to us. I beg *peace of you* in his name." But her stern heart was unmoved. Or, if it were otherwise, she would not let it appear. The question then arose, whether she should leave her. A number of persons in whom she placed confidence, advised her earnestly to do it, believing as they did that she had already suffered enough from that source. She had doubts about it. She was fearful of offending God by desiring to throw off a cross, heavy though it was, which it seemed to her that Divine Wisdom imposed upon her. Undoubtedly she was correct. But the same Providence, which imposed this cross upon her, in its own time removed it. In the winter of 1677, the winter following the death of her husband, and a few weeks after the conversation to which we have just now referred, her mother-in-law gave her notice, in express terms, that *they could no longer live together.*

20. "This," says Madame Guyon, "was fairly giving me my discharge. My scruples were now removed. I took measures to retire from the house where we had resided together, as quietly as possible, as I did not wish to give occasion for surmises and evil remarks. During the period of my widowhood thus far, I had not made any visits,

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* Mat. xv. 27.

except such as were of pure necessity and charity. I did not wish to speak of my troubles to others, or to make them known in any way. God had taught me to go to him alone. *There is nothing, which makes nature die so deeply and so quickly, as to find and to seek no earthly support, no earthly consolation.* I went out, therefore, from my mother-in-law in silence. In winter, in the cold of mid winter, when it was difficult to obtain suitable accommodations elsewhere, I went out to seek another habitation, with my three surviving children, and my little daughter's nurse."

21. We leave her mother-in-law here. The Scripture says in language, which has a true and mighty meaning to the holy heart, "*Judge not, that ye be not judged.*" There is a God above us, who is not ignorant of those weaknesses, temptations, and sorrows, existing in every heart, which are known to him only. Until we have the attribute of omniscience, which is requisite for a perfectly just judgment, let us never condemn others, however defective their characters may be, without leaving a large place for pity and forgiveness. Such, I think, were obviously the feelings of Madame Guyon in relation to this unhappy matter. For more than twelve years her mother-in-law had embittered her domestic life. But she did not fail to recognize the hand of the Lord in it. She was led to see, that God, who accomplishes his purposes by instruments, made use of the jealousy and fierceness of her mother's temper to humble and purify her own lofty spirit. God educed *her* good out of another's evil. It was a mystery which she could adore and love, although she could not fully understand it. She went out, therefore, in silence; with tears, but without rebukes.

CHAPTER XVI.

Her outward charities. Incident illustrative of her benevolence. Her interest in the education of her children. Attempts to improve her own education. Study of the Latin language. Continuance of her sad state of inward desolation. Her temptations. Writes to La Combe. Receives a favorable answer. July 22d, 1680, *the day of her deliverance and of the triumph of sanctifying grace, after nearly seven years of inward privation. Reference to her work, entitled the Torrents. Remarks. Poem illustrative of her state, translated by Cowper.*

Established once more in her own residence, with her little family around her, she lived a life more retired than ever. "I went," she says, "after no fine sights or recreations. When others went, I staid at home. I wanted to see and know nothing but Jesus Christ. My closet, where I could contemplate on divine things, was my only diversion. The queen of France was at one time in my neighborhood; but my mind was so taken up with other things, that she had not attraction enough to draw me out with the multitude to see her."

2. But retirement from the world is not necessarily retirement from duty. In her state of widowhood and of seclusion from wordly society, she did not cease to sympathize with the poor and the afflicted. Her own heart was desolate; but it was not in the power of her personal afflictions to make her forget, that others also had their sorrows. As she turned her mind upon her own situation, and as she

looked upon her fatherless children, she remembered the widow and the orphan. Still she gives us to understand, that she had less energy and made less effort in works of outward benevolence than at some former periods. But it is proper to add, that this diminished degree of external activity, so far as it existed, (which certainly was not to a very great extent,) was not owing to a change of principle or a want of pity; but is to be ascribed partly to feebleness of health, and partly to that state of inward desolation, of which we have spoken. Her strength, not only her physical vigor but her energy of purpose, was in some degree broken; but the true life, which burns without being consumed, still remained in it. And if in her weakness she was unable to do all that might have been desired, I think it can be said with truth, in the language which the Saviour applied to the woman, who poured the ointment of spikenard on his head, that she "*did what she could*." *

3. One day she relates, that one of the domestics connected with the family came in, and told her that there was a poor soldier, lying in the public road, sick, and apparently unable to help himself. She gave orders, that he should be brought in. He was one of those wrecks of humanity, ragged, unclean, and debased, who appear to be without home and without friends, and whom no one pities but that God who watches all men, and who inspires pity in the hearts of those who are like himself. For fifteen days she watched over him personally, with all the care and assiduity of a mother or sister; performing offices which, independently of the principle of benevolence which inspired them, must have been repugnant to a person of her refinement of feelings and manners. This was his last earthly habitation. He died at her house.

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* Mark xiv. 8.

4. At this period she felt herself called to give some special attention to the education of her children. On the subject of early education, and especially on the influence of mothers in the forming of the intellectual and moral habits of children, she had bestowed much thought. To a reflecting mind like hers, this important subject would be very likely to suggest itself; especially when she recollected, as she often did, the loss and injury which she herself had experienced in early life, from some degree of inattention in this respect. At that time the subject of early education, especially in its relation to those of her own sex, was comparatively new; a subject, which since her time, beginning with the valuable and interesting work of Fenelon on Female Education has been discussed, analyzed, and applied with the most successful results. In her Autobiography, in the second chapter, she has given some views on the treatment of children, particularly of daughters, views characterized by close observation and sound judgment, which it would be well worth while to repeat here, were not the subject so well understood at the present day.

5. She embraced the opportunity, which Providence now seemed to afford her, to revise and extend the elements of her own education. Light literature, as it is sometimes termed, including romances and those works of poetry which are addressed chiefly to the natural, in distinction from the religious tastes, she had laid aside years before. Her reading was limited, for the most part, to the Bible, and to those works by various authors which are designed to elucidate the Bible, and to throw light upon man's character, his continual need of divine grace, and his growth in the religious life. Many of the works on these subjects, which from her position in the Catholic church she would be inclined to consult, were originally written in the Latin language; a language which to this day is the sole repository of many

valuable works of this kind. It was under these circumstances that she commenced and prosecuted the study of the Latin, without perhaps distinctly foreseeing how much benefit it would be to her in her future inquiries and writings. But it was here, as everywhere else, that God, who guides us in a way we know not, always has an eye, in his present dispensations and discipline, to future results; results which are known to him, though hidden from us. He was preparing her, in what she was called to do, as well as in what she was called to suffer, to accomplish his own will. The same individual who taught her the Latin language, taught also her eldest son, both in Latin and other branches of knowledge. But who he was, and what claims more than a simple knowledge of the Latin language, he had to be employed in her family, we find no mention, except the single remark that he was an ecclesiastic, and came highly recommended by M. Bertot, in whom she continued to place great confidence.*

6. During the period of which we are now speaking, embracing the three years immediately preceding the death of her husband, and something more than the three years immediately subsequent to it, namely, from 1673 to 1680, she endured without cessation, but with some variations in the degree of severity, the pains of inward and of outward crucifixion. One source of the suffering which she experienced, in this season *of privation or desolation* as she terms it, we have not as yet particularly mentioned. We refer to the fact, that, notwithstanding the consecration she had made of herself to God, to be wholly and forever his, she experienced heavy and direct temptations to commit sin. With a resolution into which she had thrown the whole power of her

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* Relation de l'Origine du Progrés, et de la Condemnation du Quiêtisme, p. 5. — La Vie de Madame Guyon, Pt. I, ch. 24.

being on the one hand, and with temptations as heavy and severe as she could bear on the other, we may well imagine how terrible at times must have been her mental conflicts. Her language, (impossible it is true in its application, but still strongly expressive of her feelings,) was, that she would rather endure the sorrows of eternal banishment from God's presence, than knowingly sin against him. Undoubtedly, although she did not as yet fully understand the applications and the power of faith, she was successful in this severe conflict in a considerable degree. And yet regarding the sorrows she endured, in the course of God's providences, as evidences of his being offended, she erroneously drew the conclusion, that sin attached to almost all the actions in which she was thus strenuously endeavoring to do his will. This was her mistake; but there were some things, which she learned at this time, which were true.

7. "It was under these circumstances," she says, "that I felt the truth of what thou hast said, Oh my God, *that thou judgest our righteousness!* Oh, how pure, how holy art Thou! Who can comprehend it? I was led to see, one after another, the secret ties which bound me to earth; and which God, after he had brought them to my notice, was successively cutting asunder. All inordinate interest which I had taken in created things, (that is to say, all interest in them out of God, and out of their true relations and true degree,) was gradually taken away. It was thus, that the process of inward crucifixion, often severely trying me, went steadily on.

8. "Oh, holy Jesus!" she exclaims, in looking back upon what she then passed through, "*I was that lost sheep of Israel whom thou didst come to save.* Thou didst come to save her, *who could find no salvation out of thee.* Oh, ye stout and righteous men! Speak as much, and as proudly as you please, of the value and excellence of what you have

done for God's glory. As for me, I glory only in my infirmities, since they have merited for me such a Saviour."

9. "Loaded with miseries of all sorts," she proceeds to remark in connection with her inward experience at this time, "weighed down with the burden of continual crosses, I at last gave up hope. The darkness of an eternal night settled upon my soul. Looking upon myself as a victim doomed for destruction, I had not the least expectation of emerging out of the distressing state, in which I found myself. As in the case of the Saviour in the extremity of his sufferings, God seemed to have forsaken me. But thanks be to his grace, my heart bowed in entire and holy submission. Lost as I was, or rather as I seemed to myself to be, I could not cease to love.

Believing, as I did, in the strange position of my mind, that I could never again be acceptable to God, and never be received by him, I distinctly and fully recognized his justice and goodness; and could not repress the longing desire I had to do something, or to suffer something, to promote his glory. I could praise the name of the Lord out of the depths, to which no lower deep seemed possible." Such is the import of the terms, in which she expresses herself.

10. At this time, finding no satisfactory advice and relief from others to whom she had previously written, she wrote a letter to Francis De La Combe. Of this individual, of his first acquaintance with Madame Guyon, and of the effect of her conversation upon him, we have already had occasion to speak. The special occasion of her writing at this time was this. One of the male domestics, resident in her family, becoming interested in religious subjects, was desirous of connecting himself with the religious fraternity or Order, called the Barnabites. He naturally consulted with Madame Guyon on the subject. And in her own ignorance of the method of proceeding in the case, she was advised by

her half-brother, La Mothe, to write to La Combe, with whom they were both acquainted, and who, as he filled the situation of Superior of the association of Barnabites at Thonon in Savoy, could undoubtedly give them all the requisite information and advice.

"The circumstances of the case were such," she says, "as to render it necessary for me to write to him; and as I had always retained for him a secret respect and esteem, as one who was truly devoted to God, I was pleased with this opportunity of recommending myself to his prayers. I gave him an account of my depression and sorrow of mind, and of what I then supposed to be the case, that God no longer took pleasure in me, but had separated himself from me."

11. La Combe, who, in consequence of his ecclesiastical position we shall hereafter designate as Father La Combe, was a man of ability as well as of personal inward experience. He took a view of her case, entirely different from that which had been taken by others whom she had consulted. His experience enabled him at once to make a distinction between sorrow and sin; and to reject the opinion she had formed, that the griefs she experienced were an evidence of her having offended God. On the contrary he took the ground, that she ought to regard these afflictions as an evidence of the goodness and mercy of God, who was thus painfully but kindly removing the earthly props on which her spirit had leaned. This view, which was so entirely different from the opinions entertained at this time by herself, could not fail to give her some encouragement, although she was not as yet able fully to receive it.

12. The correspondence with Father La Combe, which was kept up at intervals for many years, commenced early in the year 1680. About the middle of July of that year she wrote to him a second time. In this letter she made

the particular request, that, if he received it before the 22d of July, a day memorable in her religious history, he would make her the subject of special supplication. The letter arrived, although the place of its destination was quite distant, the day before the time specified. And the person to whom it was addressed had too much piety and too deep a sense of his obligations to the author of it, to let a request, offered in such a humble and sorrowing spirit, pass unheeded. It was a day of prayer both with him and with her.

It was a day also of the hearing of prayer. The King was on his throne. The sceptre of mercy was extended. On that favored day, after nearly seven years of inward and outward desolation, the cloud which had rested so dark and deeply passed away, and the light of eternal glory settled upon her soul.

13. She was led for the first time to see, under the intimations of the Holy Spirit, that all things were just the reverse of what she had supposed them to be, — that affliction is mercy in disguise, that we possess by first being deprived, that death precedes life, that destruction in the spiritual experience turns to renovation, that out of the sorrows and silence of inward crucifixion, and from no other source, must grow the jubilees of everlasting bliss. God was given back; *and all things with him.* All sights and sounds, all beauties of heaven and of earth, the trees and flowers below, and the stars of heaven in their places, and social pleasures and earthly friendships, whatever the intellect could perceive or the heart could relish, — she could receive and enjoy them all, in their appropriate place and degree, because, in her victory over self, she was enabled to place and appreciate them in their true and divine relation, — *all in God, and God in all.* It was thus that the Lord turned her captivity, as he did that of his servant Job,

and made the end better and more glorious than the beginning.

14. "It was on the 22d of July, that happy day," she says, "the 22d of July, 1680, that my soul was delivered from all its pains. From the time of the reception of the first letter which I had from Father La Combe, I began to recover a new life. I was then, indeed, only like a dead person raised up, who is in the beginning of his restoration, and who is raised up to a life of hope rather than of actual possession; but on this day I was restored, as it were, to perfect life, and set wholly at liberty. I was no longer depressed, no longer borne down under the burden of sorrow. I had thought God lost, and lost forever; but I found him again. And he returned to me with unspeakable magnificence and purity.

"In a wonderful manner, which it is difficult to explain, all that which had been taken from me, was not only restored again, but was restored with increase and with new advantages. In Thee, O my God, I found it all, and more than all! The peace which I now possessed, was all holy, heavenly, inexpressible. What I had possessed some years before, in the period of my spiritual enjoyment, was consolation, peace — the *gift* of God rather than the Giver; but now, I was brought into such harmony with the will of God, whether that will was consoling or otherwise, that I might now be said to possess not merely consolation, but the *God* of consolation; not merely peace, but *the God of peace*."

15. It was at this time, and not at any earlier period, that she began to speak of the life of nature as fully slain within her. "My intellect," she says, "free from those disturbing influences which originate in selfishness, was unperplexed and clear in its action. My wandering imagination, which had formerly flitted about from object to object, was now at rest; so far at least that its action, easily regulated

in accordance with the divine will and providences, ceased to trouble me. That heart, where I had formerly detected in their secret places so many evil motives, was now, so far as I was enabled to perceive, made pure. I did all sorts of good, as it were, by a new and imperative law, written in my heart; naturally, easily, without premeditation, as it was without selfishness. Whenever a '*self-reflective*' thought was present to my mind, — that is to say, a thought reflective upon any subject in its relation to my personal interests, in its relation to *self* in the selfish sense, it was instantly rejected; and a curtain, as if by some ever present but invisible hand, was drawn in the soul before it. I no longer felt myself obliged to say that, 'when I would do good, evil was present with me.' Doing good was now my nature. The principle of action did not seem to be from motives applied without; but rather to be involved in a life springing up and operative within. All was done in God and for God; and it was done quietly, freely, naturally, continually."

16. This was indeed liberty. "And this inward liberty," she says, "by which I mean a liberty from that secret power within us which continually draws us to evil, was not only great in the beginning, but it grew more and more extensive. And it was unchangeable as it was great. It was my hope, at first, that I should enjoy this happy state for some time; but little did I think that my happiness was so great, so immutable as it was. If one may judge of a good by the trouble which precedes it, I leave mine to be estimated by the sorrows I experienced before I attained to it.

"The apostle Paul tells us, that 'the sufferings of the present life are not to be compared with the glory that is prepared for us.' How true is this remark, even of the present life! One day of this happiness, [which consisted in simple rest or harmony in God's will, whatever that will might be,] was sufficient to counterbalance years of suffering. This true peace of mind was worth all that I had undergone; although it was then only in its dawning.

17. "Sometimes, it is true, a sad suggestion presented itself. The thought sometimes occurred, which could not but be painful for the moment, that the life of nature might, in some way, reinstate itself. So that there was a wakeful spirit within me. I *watched;* and was enabled, by divine grace, to meet and repel the approaches of evil in that direction. In this renovated state, so different from what I had experienced for some years before, I felt no disposition to attribute any thing to myself. Certainly it was not I, myself, who had fastened my soul to the Cross, and under the operations of a providence, just but inexorable, had drained, if I may so express it, the blood of the life of nature to its last drop. I did not understand it then; but I understood it *now.* It was the Lord that did it. It was God that destroyed me, that he might give me the true life."

18. Such are the terms, re-arranged and interpreted, one part by another, in which she speaks of this remarkable result. In one of her books on religious experience, entitled the "TORRENTS," in which she endeavors to describe the progress of the soul towards God, illustrating the subject by torrents taking their rise in hills and mountain tops, and rolling onward towards the ocean, she has given her views of the process of inward crucifixion, derived from her own experience. It should, in fact, be regarded as a statement of what she herself passed through; and ought to be read, as it seems to me, in connection with, and as illustrative of what she has said, on the same subject, in her Life.

And this reference to the "Torrents" leads me to remark again — a remark which on some accounts it may be desirable to remember — that, in giving her views on particular subjects, I have not limited myself to her remarks made at a particular time, but have taken the liberty, in order to give her precise views, to combine together statements made at different times and at different places of her works. My object has not been to give a literal translation of her writings just as they stand, which, under all the circumstances of the case, would have been doing great injustice to her, — but, by studying their spirit, by re-adjusting their arrangement, by the separation of what is essential and what is not essential, and by a judicious combination, to give the true picture, so far as can now be done, of what she was, her thought, her feeling and action, her trials and triumphs.

19. And it is in accordance with these views, which require us to consult what she has said on different occasions in relation to the same subject, that I think we may properly introduce here one of her poems. At what particular time it was written, cannot now be ascertained. But whatever was the time of its origin, it evidently has reference, in its sentiments, to the period and the experience, to which we have just attended. In a figurative or poetical manner, it happily describes the situation of a soul deprived of the natural life, by being successively deprived of the objects of its natural desire and love, till, by wholly ceasing to desire or love anything out of the will of God, whatever that will may be, it finds the true life, the life divine.

THE DEALINGS OF GOD OR THE DIVINE LOVE IN BRINGING THE SOUL TO A STATE OF ABSOLUTE ACQUIESCENCE.

'T WAS my purpose, on a day,
To embark and sail away.
As I climbed the vessel's side,
LOVE was sporting in the tide;
"Come," he said, — "ascend — make haste,
Launch into the boundless waste."

Many mariners were there,
Having each his separate care;
They, that rowed us, held their eyes
Fixed upon the starry skies;
Others steered or turned the sails,
To receive the shifting gales.

Love, with power divine supplied,
Suddenly my courage tried;
In a moment it was night,
Ship and skies were out of sight;
On the briny wave I lay,
Floating rushes all my stay.

Did I with resentment burn
At this unexpected turn?
Did I wish myself on shore,
Never to forsake it more?
No — "*My soul*," I cried, "*be still;*
If I must be lost, I will."

Next he hastened to convey
Both my frail supports away;
Seized my rushes; bade the waves
Yawn into a thousand graves.
Down I went, and sunk as lead,
Ocean closing o'er my head.

Still, however, life was safe;
And I saw him turn and laugh;
"Friend," he cried, "adieu! lie low,
While the wintry storms shall blow;
When the Spring has calmed the main,
You shall rise, and float again."

Soon I saw him, with dismay,
Spread his plumes, and soar away;
Now I mark his rapid flight;
Now he leaves my aching sight;
He is gone whom I adore,
'T is in vain to seek him more.

How I trembled then, and feared,
When my Love had disappeared!
"Wilt thou leave me thus," I cried,
"Whelmed beneath the rolling tide?"
Vain attempt to reach his ear!
Love was gone, and would not hear.

Ah! return and love me still;
See me subject to thy will;
Frown with wrath, or smile with grace,
Only let me see thy face!
Evil I have none to fear;
All is good, if Thou art near.

Yet he leaves me, — cruel fate!
Leaves me in my lost estate;
Have I sinned? Oh, say wherein?
Tell me, and forgive my sin!
King, and Lord, whom I adore,
Shall I see thy face no more?

Be not angry — I resign
Henceforth all my will to thine.
I consent that Thou depart,
Though thine absence breaks my heart
Go then, and forever, too;
All is right that Thou wilt do.

This was just what Love intended;
He was now no more offended;
Soon as I became a child,
Love returned to me and smiled.
Never strife shall more betide
'Twixt the Bridegroom and his bride

CHAPTER XVII.

Remarks on sanctification as compared with justification. On the importance of striving after sanctification. On the state of Madame Guyon at this time. Her work, entitled the Torrents. Some sentiments given from it as descriptive of her own experience. Singular illustration, by which she shows the difference between common Christians and others. Of the depth of the experience which is implied in true sanctification. On the question whether all must endure the same amount of suffering in experiencing sanctification. Her poem on the joy of the cross.

THEOLOGIANS very properly make a distinction between justification and sanctification. The two great moral and religious elements, namely, entire self-renunciation and entire faith in God through Jesus Christ, are involved in both of these religious experiences, and give to them a close relationship; without, however, confounding them and making them one. They are related to each other, without ceasing to be separate.

2. Justification, while it does not exclude the present, has special reference to the *past.* Sanctification, which is subsequent to justification in the order of nature, has exclusive reference to the present and future. Justification inquires, How shall the sin, which is past, be forgiven? Sanctification inquires, How shall we be kept from sin at the present time and in time to come? Justification, in its result upon individuals, removes the condemnatory power or guilt

of sin; while sanctification removes the power of sin itself.*

3. No man can be a Christian, who is not justified. But no intelligent Christian can rest satisfied with justification alone. He earnestly desires, not only that his sins may be forgiven, but that they may be removed — taken away. "He hungers and thirsts after righteousness." He, who professes to be a Christian, and yet has not this hungering and thirsting after a heart that is sanctified, has no good reason to believe that he has ever known the blessedness of a heart that is justified. "By their fruits," says the Saviour, "ye shall know them." Sanctification is the fruit.

4. A sanctified heart is only another expression for a holy heart. A holy heart, whatever other expressions may apply to it and describe it, may be described, I think, as a heart from which selfishness is excluded, and which loves God with all its power of love. From this time onward, Madame Guyon, who had been cut off from every other resource, and had learned the great lesson of living by faith alone, professed to love God with such love.

Whether we call this state of experience pure love or perfect love, whether we denominate it sanctification or assurance of faith, is perhaps not very essential. Certain it is, that it seemed to her, without professing or presuming to be beyond the possibility of mistake, that she loved her heavenly Father, in accordance with what the Saviour requires of us, with her whole power of loving. And accordingly she could no longer hesitate to apply to herself some of the strongest expressions, descriptive of the inward life, which are found in the Scriptures. She could say, with the apostle, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."* She understood, as she never did before, the import of what the same apostle says in the eighth chapter of Romans. "There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit; for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."† She, who a short time before believed herself outcast and lost forever, had now the faith and the courage — a courage based upon faith and adorned with the deepest humility — to appropriate the beautiful conclusion of the same chapter; "*I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*"

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* For some remarks on this subject, see the Interior or Hidden Life.

5. We have already alluded to the book, entitled *The Torrents.* It is obviously a work drawn chiefly from her own experience. In the latter part of it, she describes the state of her mind, as it was at this period; without, however, making any distinct reference to herself, except that she occasionally speaks in the first person, as if forgetting for a moment the style of narration which she had adopted. I will give here some parts of what I understand her to say of herself; substituting the first person for the third person, and translating not merely her words, which, taken as they stand, would convey but very imperfect and perhaps false ideas to an English reader, but what I suppose her to *mean* by them. This is the import of some of her remarks.

6. "Great was the change, which I had now experienced; but still in my exterior life, that part of my life which came under the observation of others, I appeared to them quite

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* Gal. ii. 20. † Rom. viii. 1, 2, 38, 39.

simple, unobtrusive, and common. And the reason was, that my soul was not only brought into harmony with itself and with God, but with God's providences. In the exercise of faith and love, I endured and performed whatever came in God's providence, in submission, in thankfulness, and silence. I was now in God and God in me; and where God is, there is as much simplicity as power. And what I did was done in such simplicity and childlikeness of spirit, that the world did not observe anything which was much calculated to attract notice.

7. "I had a deep peace; a peace which seemed to pervade the whole soul. A peace which resulted from the fact, that all my desires were fulfilled in God. I desired nothing; feared nothing; willed nothing. I feared nothing; that is to say, I feared nothing, considered in its *ultimate results and relations*, because my strong faith placed God at the head of all perplexities and all events. I desired nothing but what I now had, because I had a full belief, that in my present state of mind the results of each moment, considered in relation to myself, constituted the fulfilment of the divine purposes. I willed nothing; meaning in the statement that I had no will of my own. As a sanctified heart is always in harmony with the divine providences, I had no will but the divine will, of which such providences are the true and appropriate expression. How could such a soul have other than a deep peace, — a peace which was not limited to the uncertainties of the emotional part of our nature, but which pervaded and blessed the whole mind! Nothing seemed to diminish it; nothing troubled it.

8. "I do not mean to say, that I was in a state in which I could not be afflicted. My physical system, my senses, had not lost the power of suffering. My natural sensibilities were susceptible of being pained. Oftentimes I suffered much. But interiorly, in the centre of the soul, if I may so

express it, there was divine and supreme peace. The lower soul, or the soul considered in its connection with the objects immediately around it, might at times be troubled and afflicted; but the higher or central soul, or the soul considered in its relation to God and the divine will, was entirely calm, trustful, and happy. The trouble at the circumference, originating in part from a disordered physical constitution, did not affect and disturb the divine peace of the centre.

9. "One characteristic of this higher degree of experience was a sense of inward purity. My mind had such a oneness with God, such a unity with the divine nature, that nothing seemed to have power to soil it and to diminish its purity. It experienced the truth of that declaration of Scripture, that to the pure all things are pure. As God is present to sinners in the matter of instructing and reproving them, and also in that of physically upholding and sustaining them, even in the very act of sin, and yet without being rendered sinful or contracting any moral evil, so the person who is truly pure, may see sinful acts, may hear impure and sinful conversation, or may otherwise be brought, providentially and in the discharge of duty, into connection with impurities without contracting any stain from them. Such stains have no affinity with the pure mind. The pollution which surrounds it, has no power upon it; as the dark and impure mud does not defile the sunbeams that shine upon it, which rather appear brighter and purer from the contrast. The soul, bright with the brightness which comes from God, seems to have no knowledge of any darkness or evil in itself.

10. "But, though I was so much blessed, I was not conscious of any merit, nor tempted by any suggestions of merit in myself. Indeed, I seemed to be so united with God, so made one with the centre and sum of all good, that my thoughts did not easily turn upon myself as a distinct object of reflection; and, consequently, it would not have been an

easy thing for me to attach to myself the ideas of desert or merit. If I had done virtuously and meritoriously by a *laborious effort*, the idea of merit would more naturally and readily have suggested itself, and I might have been tempted to indulge thoughts of that kind. But now that God had become the inward operator, and every movement was a movement originating, as it were, in a divine inspiration, and as a holy life had become as natural to me as the life of nature formerly had been, I could not well attribute to myself, and certainly had no disposition to attribute to myself, what evidently belonged to God. To him, and to him only, to his goodness and his grace, I attributed all worthiness, all praise.

11. "It was one of the characteristics of my experience at this time, that I could not move myself, or bring myself into action, from the principle of self, because self was gone. I stood silent and unmoved in the midst of God's providences, until the time of movement came, which was indicated by these providences. Then I decided, when God called me to decide, and with God to help me to decide. Every decision of the judgment, followed by a movement or action, seemed to be from God; so that God became the principle of movement. In this state of mind, self-reflecting acts, or acts which turn back upon the mind and seek for motives in its own interest, are taken away.

12. "From this time, I found myself in the enjoyment of what may be termed liberty. Being free from all natural or unholy desires, which cannot fail to restrict and embarrass the ease of the mind's action, my mind experienced a remarkable facility in doing and suffering everything which presented itself in the order of God's providence. God's order became its law. In fulfilling this law, it experienced no inward repugnance, but fulfilled its own highest wishes, and therefore could not but be conscious of the highest inward

liberty. When the soul loses the limit of selfishness,—a limit which fixes the soul in itself,—it has no limit but in God, who is without limits. What limit, then, can be placed to the length and breadth of its freedom?

13. "I regard the deprivations and the sufferings of Job, and his subsequent restoration to prosperity and to the manifestations of the divine favor, as a history which illustrates, as if in a mirror, the process of inward death and inward resurrection which is experienced by those who arrive at the state of full interior transformation. God first took away everything, and then restored everything, as it were, an hundred fold. And so in the inward life. Our worldly possessions, our property, our influence, our reputation, our health, are taken away, if God sees it necessary; he then smites our domestic and other affections, which have persons for their objects rather than things, either by smiting and withering the affections in themselves, or in the objects to which they are attached. He then proceeds to crucify the subject of the divine operation to any attachment to and any reliance on his outward works as a ground of merit and acceptance. In its death to everything where self reigns instead of God, the mind dies also to any sense of its own inward exercises and virtues, so far as they are a ground of self-gratulation and of interior complacency. Nor does this process stop, till the life of nature, which consists in inordinate attachments, is entirely exterminated. But the soul cannot live without a life of some kind. There are but two, and can be but two principles of moral life in the universe; one, which makes ourselves, or the most limited private good, the centre; the other, which makes God, who may be called the Universal Good, the centre. And by that necessary law which says, where there is life there must be a *principle* of life, when one of these principles dies, the other emerges from its state of abeyance and inactivity, and takes the place

of that which has passed away. So that when *self* dies in the soul, God lives; when *self* is annihilated, God is enthroned.

14. "In this state of mind I did not practise the virtues *as virtues*. That is to say, I did not make them distinct objects of contemplation, and endeavor to practise them, as a person generally does in the beginnings of the Christian life, by a separate and constrained effort. I seemed to practise them naturally, almost instinctively. The *effort*, if I had made one, would have been to do otherwise. It was my *life* to do them. Charity, sincerity, truth, humility, submission, and every other virtue, seemed to be involved in my present state of mind, and to make a part of it; being, each in its appropriate place, an element of life. A formal act of humiliation, for instance, performed interiorly at a certain time and in a certain way, would have been impossible, because such an act, or such an experience, would have implied, that the soul, in undergoing it, was taken out of a state which was not humble; whereas humility, or that state of mind which the term humility expresses, is an essential part of the soul's state, so long as it can be said to be truly transformed or sanctified. I repeat, therefore, that the holy soul has, *immanent* or interiorly inherent in itself, the essence of all Christian virtues and duties, which, naturally and without effort, as if a man should have them without knowing that he had them, develop themselves on their appropriate occasions, by their own law of action, and as the result of a life which is *a true and operative life*."

15. Among other things, which fall from her in this part of her writings, she says, that common Christians, or Christians in the ordinary degree of experience, may be compared to a pump. And she gives a significant reason for the remark. The idea is this. The pump has water; but the water is thrown out by effort, by the agitation resulting from

exterior appliances. So common Christians have in them the water of life. But the life of Christianity, as it exists in these Christians, develops itself and throws itself off, as it were, periodically and on particular occasions; under the reproofs of a Christian brother, under the excitements of a prayer meeting, under the pressure of a powerful sermon, in the presence and under the impulse of large ecclesiastical and clerical assemblies, or under some other instigative pressure exteriorly applied. So that the life of which they are the possessors, although it is the true life undoubtedly, has not power enough to operate of itself, but may be said to be compressed or forced out of them. And those who are to be benefited, must be present at a particular time, with their pails and basins, in order to receive that which is thus extracted, before the outward pressure ceases.

16. But Christians in a higher state of religious experience, those especially who are in a state of assured faith and love, may be compared to fountains which flow out of themselves. In the language of the Saviour, the water which is in them, is a "*well of water springing up to everlasting life.*" It is true, that, like the waters of Siloa which came from the sides of Mount Sion, and which were pleasing to God and to his people, they generally flow *softly;* but it is equally true, that they flow abundantly and constantly. Nor is it a small thing, that they do not flow in artificial channels, which men's hands have cut for them, but in those which God has appointed; "at their own sweet will," as some one has expressed it, and yet in reality without any will of their own. And bearing life to others, as well as having life in themselves, the trees grow and flowers bloom on their banks; and when the weary traveller comes there, he finds the cooling shade above, as well as the refreshing draught beneath.

17. I think that, in view of the narrative which has been given thus far, we may very properly and justly conclude,

that the work of sanctification, wherever it exists, is a work which enters deeply into our nature. Neither reason, nor experience, nor Scripture, authorizes us to speak of it, when it truly exists, as a *superficial* work; that is to say, a work near the surface and easy to be done. It is not the application of something which alters and polishes the outside merely. It is not, properly speaking, a remodeling and improvement of the old nature, so much as a *renovation.*

18. There are some things, which go under the name of sanctification, to which that term is not strictly applicable. There is, for instance, what may perhaps be termed a physical sanctification; a sanctification which is limited by the epithet applied to it, to the government and the development of our physical nature. But it is hardly necessary to say, that the regulation of the appetites may exist without a proper state of some other modifications of desire, and without a spiritual will. The man, of whom the Saviour speaks in the Gospel, could say, very truly, "*I fast twice in the week;* I give tithes of all I possess;" but it is very clear, that he was not a man who was approved and accepted in all respects. Many persons who have subjected themselves to the greatest outward austerities, have complained that they were still the subjects of an inward rebellion; and did not experience that communion and acceptance with God, which they had anticipated as the result of their assiduous methods of physical restraint and culture. Physical sanctification, which relates particularly to the appetites and the exterior nature, is undoubtedly a part of the sanctification of the *man;* but differs from it as a part differs from the whole.

There are some persons, who, in addition to the rectification of the outward nature, have had a degree and kind of inward experience which is truly remarkable. It is not an experience, which, properly speaking, can be described as sanctification; but is sometimes taken for it. These persons have been much exercised on the subject of a holy life; they have experienced much anxiety in regard to it; and in consequence of the new views they have had, and the inward victories they have obtained, have been the subjects of a high degree of joy. Sometimes the joy, owing in part, I suppose, to some peculiarities of mental character, is sudden, intense, overwhelming. They suppose themselves wholly and forever conquerors. Not being in a situation fully to analyze their feelings, either their origin, their nature, or permanency, it is not wonderful that they make mistakes, and that they ascribe wholly to grace what is partly due to nature; attributing to religion, which is always benevolent and pure, what belongs to physical or selfish excitement. Experience often shows, that the sanctification which they profess under such circumstances, has not those elements of kindness, of forbearance and meekness, of permanent faith and of inward subjection and nothingness, which are necessary to characterize it as true. In other words, it is a sanctification which is evidently limited and imperfect, because, although it has some elements of good in it, it has pervaded only the intellectual and emotional part, including the desires perhaps to some extent, without being able to reach and subdue that terrible refuge and fortress of evil, the *natural will.*

19. If these views are correct, they tend to diminish very much the dangers which are sometimes supposed to attend the agitation of this subject. The danger, expressed in a few words, is this. If we allow the possibility of sanctification in the present life, we shall, from time to time, find persons who will profess this blessing, without possessing it; a mistake which cannot well exist without being more or less injurious. The same danger attends the doctrine, that we may possess religion in any degree whatever short of

sanctification. A man may profess religion without possessing it, and the mistake may be very injurious. And in all cases whatever, where the profession is not accordant with the reality, those evils cannot fail to follow which are naturally attendant upon error.

20. But if sanctification is such a work as we have represented it to be, so thoroughly explorative and renovating, and if it be generally understood to be what it really is, people will be cautious in making the profession. At least, if the profession is falsely made, the error will easily be detected. He, to whom the grace of sanctification can be truly ascribed, is one with Christ, and has Christ's dispositions; a man meek, contented, benevolent, and devoutly acquiescent in whatever bears the stamp of providence; a man who goes hither and thither on errands of wisdom and mercy, without tumult and noise; doing good to others without asking or expecting return; in his spirit, where the Holy Ghost dwells, always divinely peaceful, because he is in harmony with God, and consequently in harmony with all things of which God is the life. Such a man, on his lips, his countenance, his actions, his life, has a divine seal. It cannot easily be mistaken, except by those, in whom the abundance of the natural life, which perplexes the natural and especially the spiritual judgment, has taken away the power of divine appreciation.

21. There is one question, which naturally arises here. Is it absolutely necessary to undergo all which Madame Guyon passed through, in order to experience these results? I think that this question may properly be answered in the negative. Some resist the operation of God, because they are afraid of God; some, because in the process of the inward operation they do not understand what he is doing and to what he is tending; and still more because they love the world and the things of the world, more than they love God

and the things of God. Resistance on the part of the creature, whatever cause it may arise from, implies and requires aggressive acts of trial, of infliction, and of reproof, on the part of Him whose right it is to rule. And the greater the resistance, the greater must be the blow which aims to subdue it. Those, who resist much, will suffer much.

22. "In some persons, though not in many," we have had occasion to remark in another place, "the natural man, in the comparative sense of the terms, dies easily. These persons, these chosen ones of the Lord, seem to have an intuitive appreciation of what God justly and necessarily requires. They see, with the clearness of light, that it is impossible at the same time to serve God and Mammon. Accordingly, they submit themselves to the leadings and the power of God, without resistance. They yield readily and willingly, like the lamb that is led to the slaughter; and the result is, that the inward crucifixion, though not less deep and thorough, is personally less afflictive. The Holy Ghost proceeds gently but constantly in his operations; unbinding every tie of nature; cutting loose every ligament which fastens the soul to the earth, until, in its freedom from the slavery of the world, it expands and rejoices in the liberty of God.

23. "Other persons, and we may add, the great majority of persons, are not brought to this state of freedom from the world and of union with God, without passing through exceeding afflictions, both external and internal. And this happens partly through ignorance, and partly and more generally through SELF-WILL. They are slow to learn what is to be done, and equally reluctant to submit to its being done. God desires and intends that they shall be his; but the hour of their inward redemption not being fully come, they still love the world. They attach their affections first to one object and then to another. They would perhaps be

pleased to have God for their portion; but they must have something besides God. In other words, they vainly imagine that they would like to have God and their idols at the same time. And there they remain for a time, fixed, obstinate, inflexible. But God loves them. Therefore, as they will not learn by kindness, they must learn by terror. The sword of Providence and the Spirit is applied successively to every tie that binds them to the world. Their property, their health, their friends, all fall before it. The inward fabric of hopes and joys, where self-love was nourished and pride had its nest, is leveled to the dust. They are smitten within and without; burned with fire; overwhelmed with the waters; peeled and scathed and blasted to the very extremity of endurance; till they learn in this dreadful Baptism the inconsistency of the attempted worship of God and Mammon at the same time, and are led to see, that God is and ought to be, the true and only sovereign."*

24. But souls in whom grace is triumphant, are not beyond or above the cross. Such grace enables us to bear the cross, but it does not deliver us from it. Christ was holy; but he did not on that account cease to be a sufferer. It was by suffering that his divine graces were tried. Madame Guyon was willing to follow in the steps of the Saviour whom she loved, and to be as He was. Christ had crowned her; and perhaps it was a crown of thorns. But he himself had worn it; and that was enough to make it infinitely dear to her heart. *Spiritually*, she had entered into *rest*. But the rest of earth ought not to be confounded with the rest of heaven. If it is the same in its nature, it is different in its locality. The one sleeps amid roses, and is wrapped in sunshine; the other has a dwelling-place with clouds and tempests for its canopy, with thorns and briars for its covering. She welcomed,

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* See Principles of the Interior or Hidden Life, Pt. II. chap. 10.

therefore, the cross still, now and in all time to come, till her head should be laid in the grave. The following Poem expresses some of her sentiments on this subject.

THE JOY OF THE CROSS.

Long plunged in sorrow, I resign
My soul to that dear hand of thine,
Without reserve or fear;
That hand shall wipe my streaming eyes;
Or into smiles of glad surprise
Transform the falling tear.

My sole possession is thy love;
In earth beneath, or heaven above,
I have no other store;
And though with fervent suit I pray,
And importune Thee, night and day,
I ask thee nothing more.

My rapid hours pursue the course,
Prescribed them by love's sweetest force,
And I thy sovereign will.
Without a wish to escape my doom;
Though still a sufferer from the womb,
And doomed to suffer still.

By thy command, where'er I stray,
Sorrow attends me all my way
A never failing friend;
And, if my sufferings may augment
Thy praise, behold me well content,
Let *Sorrow* still attend!

It cost me no regret, that she,
Who followed Christ, should follow me;
And though, where'er she goes,
Thorns spring spontaneous at her feet,
I love her, and extract a sweet
From all her bitter woes.

Adieu! ye vain delights of earth,
Insipid sports, and childish mirth,
I taste no sweets in you;
Unknown delights are in the cross,
All joy beside, to me is dross;
And Jesus thought so too.

The *Cross!* Oh, ravishment and bliss—
How grateful e'en its anguish is;
Its bitterness how sweet!
There every sense, and all the mind,
In all her faculties refined,
Taste happiness complete.

Souls, once enabled to disdain
Base, sublunary joys, maintain
Their dignity secure;
The fever of desire is passed,
And love has all its genuine taste,
Is delicate and pure.

Self-love no grace in Sorrow sees,
Consults her own peculiar ease;
'T is all the bliss she knows;
But nobler aims true Love employ,
In self-denial is her joy,
In suffering her repose.

Sorrow and Love go side by side;
Nor height nor depth can e'er divide
Their heaven-appointed bands;
Those dear associates still are one,
Nor till the race of life is run,
Disjoin their wedded hands.

Jesus, avenger of our fall,
Thou faithful lover, above all
The cross have ever borne!
Oh tell me,—life is in thy voice,—
How much afflictions were thy choice,
And sloth and ease thy scorn!

Thy choice and mine shall be the same,
Inspirer of that holy flame,
Which must forever blaze!
To take the cross and follow Thee,
Where love and duty lead, shall be
My portion and my praise.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Temporary uncertainty in regard to her future course of action. Had thoughts of entering into a Nunnery. Decides not to take this course. Some reasons for this decision. Proposals of marriage. All such propositions and views decided against. Remains still uncertain what course to take. Has a short season of comparative retirement and peace. Extract from one of her Poems.

In this new and encouraging state of her feelings, the question now pressed upon the mind of Madame Guyon, What course should she take during the remainder of her life? When the probabilities of a course of action were so balanced that she knew not what to do, it seems to have been a principle with her to remain patiently in her present position, and not to do anything. She believed, and she had some support for her belief, in the scriptures, that inaction, or rather a suspension of action, until Providence indicates the course to be taken, with some degree of clearness, is the only true and safe action. At such times, Providence, for reasons perhaps known only to itself, requires no other kind of action than that of *waiting.*

2. And this action, — if such it may be called, — when it is such as it ought to be, is far from being unimportant, because it implies a resigned and submissive spirit, a rejection of all unholy motives and impulses, a sincere desire to know the truth, and a recognition of God's ability and readiness to impart it. Indeed, to make men wait, to make them wait submissively and patiently, until he sees fit to permit and

authorize their action in subordination to his own time and manner of action, is a part, and a merciful and important part, of God's discipline of his children here on earth.

3. The first plan which suggested itself to her mind, and which occupied, for a time, more or less of her thoughts, was to arrange her affairs in such a manner as to relieve her from the personal care of them, and to go into a nunnery. *There*, in retirement and silence, it seemed to her, as she looked at the subject on its first being presented to her consideration, that she might serve God and benefit her fellow creatures, without the hazards to which she had formerly been exposed. Many were the names which she cherished in her own personal recollections, many were the names celebrated in history, of those, worn out with the cares and sorrows of the world, who had thus sought God and that peace of God which passes understanding, in places of religious seclusion. She thought of Genevieve Granger, her associate and adviser in religion; she thought of her own sainted sister, who first watched over and instructed her in the Ursuline seminary; the Marys and the Catharines of other times, the De Chantals and the St. Theresas, came to recollection. But she had already learned, that God moves in his providences. His providences are his home; his loved, his chosen home. And it required no great reach of thought to come to the conclusion, that those who go to the convent, or to any other place, without being led there by the wisdom and signature of an overruling providence, will fail to find God, whatever may be the professed object of their search, either as the guide or the end of their journey. She had religion enough, and of course religious wisdom enough, to know, that there was another and a higher question first to be answered. And that question was, What is God's will? Looking at this proposed course in the light of the divine will, and, in order to know that will, considering it in its

connection with what she owed to her family and the world, she decided against it.

4. The situation of her children, in particular, had weight in this decision. The two youngest were of an age which seemed to demand an oversight from her, if it did not especially require her personal attention. She intimates, soon after the death of her husband, that his death did not leave her entirely at liberty to pursue what course she might choose. She was still the head of a family, and could not disregard the claims and duties which that responsible relation imposed upon her. "I was still restricted in my movements," she says, "in having two children given me in so short a time before my husband's death. If it had been otherwise, if I had been left with my eldest son alone, I might have been justified in adopting some plans in accordance with my ideas and wishes of religious retirement. I should probably have placed him at some college, and have gone myself into the Convent of the Benedictines. But the situation of my younger children precluded all thoughts of this kind. God had other designs upon me." *

5. Among other things, which were presented for her consideration, and which had a connection with her future life, was the question of a second marriage. Propositions of that nature were made to her, which brought the subject before her in such a manner, that she could not, as a woman, and still more as a Christian, pass them by without some attention. Proposals of marriage, as she herself states, were made to her by three different persons. At the middle age of life, possessed of great wealth, with a high reputation for intelligence and refined culture, and entitled, on these and on other accounts, to move in the leading circles of society, the question was one which brought itself home to her

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* La Vie de Madame Guyon, Pt. I. chap. 22.

situation, her sympathies, and her prospects of usefulness. Carrying this matter, as she did everything else, to God, who alone is the author of the true inward light, she came to the conclusion, and could not for a moment doubt, that she was called to another sphere of responsibility and duty. The question, independently of the individuals who sought her, was decided on general principles, for all persons and for all time. She says, in relation to this subject, "There was one of these persons, in particular, whose high birth and amiable exterior qualities, might, under other circumstances, have had an influence on my inclinations. But I was resolved to be God's alone."

6. Thus bidding adieu to the world, without shutting herself out of the world, she awaited the course of events. Her present position, however, pleasant as it was in many respects, and her present field of labor, which was comparatively limited, did not satisfy her mind. That is to say, she had an inward conviction, without being discontented or anxious, that the purposes of God were not fulfilled in it. She seemed to see a hand in the clouds, which beckoned her away; but she knew not whither. There seemed to be a voice in her spirit, a voice uttered secretly but authoritatively, which said, that there were other duties and other crosses before her. Providence had not unfolded its intentions. But she knew, that the sign of God had its appropriate interpretation; and could not doubt, that it would be written on her awakened spirit in his own good time.

7. In the meanwhile she enjoyed a short season of comparative retirement and rest. It was now the summer of 1680. "Oh, my Lord," she says, "what happiness did I not largely taste, in my solitude and with my little family, where nothing interrupted my tranquillity. Living near Paris, but out of its limits, I enjoyed the advantages of the country as well as of the city. My younger children were of an age

which did not require from me much personal care and attention, especially as I was assisted in taking care of them by persons well qualified for that office. Disburdened of the sorrows which had so long borne me down, and availing myself of these propitious circumstances, I often retired into a forest near my residence; and many were the hours and days of religious communion and happiness which I passed there." In the simple and affecting language of one of her poems,

"Here sweetly forgetting and wholly forgot
By the world and its turbulent throng,
The birds and the streams lend me many a note,
That aids meditation and song.

Ye desolate scenes, to your solitude led,
My life I in praises employ,
And scarce know the source of the tears that I shed,
Whether springing from sorrow or joy.

Though awfully silent, and shaggy, and rude,
I am charmed with the peace ye afford;
Your shades are a temple where none will intrude,
The abode of my lover and Lord.

Ah, send me not back to the race of mankind,
Perversely by folly beguiled;
For where in the crowds I have left, shall I find
The spirit and heart of a child?

Here let me, though fixed in a desert, be free,
A little one, whom they despise;
Though lost to the world, if in union with Thee,
I am holy, and happy, and wise."

CHAPTER XIX.

1680. *Remarkable incident in a church at Paris. Effect of it on her mind. Consulted by a person on the subject of going on a mission to Siam. Asks his opinion on her proposed plan of going on a mission to the neighborhood of Geneva. His advice. Visit of Bishop D'Aranthon at Paris. Consults him on the subject. Decides to leave Paris for Gex, a town not far from Geneva. Her charities during the scarcity in the winter of* 1680. *Her efforts for the spiritual good of others. Preparations for departure. Trials of mind. Her remarks upon them and upon the opinions formed of her by others.*

It is to this period, either the summer or early in the autumn, 1680, that we refer the following incident. "I was obliged," she says, "to go to Paris about some business. Having entered into a church that was very dark, I went up to the first confessor I found there. I did not know him. I had never seen him before, and have never seen him since. I made a simple and short confession; but with the confessor himself, aside from the religious act in which he had aided me, I did not enter into conversation. And accordingly he surprised me much in saying of his own accord, 'I know not who you are, whether maid, wife, or widow; but I feel a strong inward motion to exhort you to do what the Lord has made known to you that he requires of you. I have nothing else to say.'

2. "I answered him, Father, I am a widow, who have little children. What else could God require of me, but to

take due care of them in their education? He replied, 'I know nothing about this. You know if God manifests to you that He requires something of you, there is nothing in the world which ought to hinder you from doing his will. *One must leave one's children to do this.*' "

3. This remark, coming in this unexpected manner, touched her in a point of great interest. The conviction, originating under other and higher than earthly influences, had gradually formed itself in her mind, that she must leave her present residence, and labor somewhere at a distance, she knew not where. But how could she leave her children? This question caused her some perplexity; but she was not long in perceiving, that it is easier to the holy mind to leave one's children, however strong their claim upon the affections, than to leave any path of duty which God's providence clearly points out. The words, which she had heard under circumstances so singular, reminded her of the words of the Saviour, uttered and recorded for all times and all occasions. "*He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.*" *

4. In her deliberations on this important subject, she had nearly come to the conclusion, though with some doubts attending it, that she was called to religious labors in that part of France and Savoy which borders upon the Republic of Geneva, and perhaps in the city of Geneva itself. If, in the present state of her affairs, she could not very conveniently, or consistently, go on a strictly foreign mission, and devote herself to labors among the unchristianized heathen, (one of the plans which, there is some reason to think, suggested itself at this period to her mind,) she would, by laboring in the distant and rude towns and provinces which

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* Mat. chap. x. 37, 38.

lay at the foot of the Alps, sustain a position of benevolent action hardly less trying in itself, or less beneficial in its consequences. While her mind was in this position and deliberating upon this subject, she was visited by a religious friend from a distance, who came to her house, in part, for the purpose of consulting her in relation to a design, which he himself cherished, of going on a religious mission to Siam. With some reluctance, the cause of which is not explained, he opened the subject. As he was a man, whose age and infirmities seemed to disqualify him for so difficult and distant an enterprise, she did not hesitate to discourage him.

5. But said she to her friend, "I have reason to think, that God has sent you here not merely to get an opinion in regard to *your* mission, but to give an opinion in regard to *mine.* I need your assistance, and must lay your services under contribution. I desire you to give me your advice." Her religious friend, whose name she does not give, kept the subject under consideration for some days; and having added prayer to deliberation, he at last gave an opinion favorable to her plans, subject only to this condition, that she should first submit the matter to Bishop D'Aranthon, who bore the title of bishop of Geneva, although he resided at the city of Anneci, twenty miles south of Geneva, and under whose directions she would naturally be placed in going into that part of France. It was the opinion of this person, that if D'Aranthon approved, she should go; but if not, as he was in a situation especially fitted to judge of it, she should give up the design.

6. To this view of the subject she readily assented. It seemed so important, both to her and to the person whom she had consulted, to ascertain fully the views of Bishop D'Aranthon, and such was the interest felt in her proposed mission by this person himself, that he offered to go personally to the city of Anneci, the distant residence of the Bishop,

and lay the subject before him. Madame Guyon hesitated somewhat upon this proposition, because, although he was full of religious fervor, and wished to spend his last days in attempting to convert the Siamese, he was physically unfitted, at his period of life, to endure much hardship. While they were thus considering what it was proper to do, she informs us, that two travellers, both of them religious persons, called at her house, with no object apparently but that of resting themselves, and stated to them that Bishop D'Aranthon was then in the city of Paris. He had been there some weeks; but living at this time much retired, she had not heard of it.

7. D'Aranthon was a humble, sincere man. As Protestants, we might naturally suppose him to be in some errors; but he had the great merit of being sincere; he believed strongly, and he endeavored to act up to what he believed. The people, over whose religious interests he presided, were for the most part a poor people, engaged in agricultural pursuits, and simple in their thoughts and manners. They dwelt partly in Savoy and partly in France; in sterile but romantic regions, situated at the foot of the Alpine ranges. Sympathizing with a people, whose lot could be mitigated and rendered happy only by the influences of the religious sentiment, he loved them, and labored for them most sincerely and faithfully. And it was a great satisfaction to him to find any person, especially such a woman as Madame Guyon, willing to coöperate with him in spreading among them the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

8. On hearing, in the way which has been mentioned, that Bishop D'Aranthon was in the city of Paris, Madame Guyon visited him without delay. In her Autobiography she speaks of but one visit to him. The author of the Life of D'Aranthon says, that there were a number of inter-

views.* This was probably the case. The good Bishop received her frankly and kindly. She stated her situation; the experience she had passed through; and her fixed purpose to devote herself to the service of God in all coming time. But how and where, she knew not; except that the concurrence of providences, combined with something within her, seemed to indicate, that she might, perhaps, labor profitably in the distant part of France and the contiguous portion of Savoy, which was included within his Diocese. It had occurred to her also, as a thing which might be proper to be done, to employ the substance which God had given her, in forming a charitable establishment for the resort of those who might be found truly willing to serve God, and who might need such aid. "The Bishop," she says, "approved my design."

9. Under these circumstances, with no desire but that of accomplishing God's will, she was enabled, in the spirit of consecration and of prayer, to bring this matter, which had occupied much of her thoughts, to a decision. She determined, in concurrence with the views of D'Aranthon, and also of her former acquaintance and friend, Father La Combe, whom, in consequence of his residing in that part of the country, she had thought it proper to consult by letter, to leave her present residence in the neighborhood of Paris, as soon as her affairs could be adjusted, and take up her abode for a time at the town of Gex, until Providence should indicate some other field of labor. Gex, it is proper to add here, is the name of a place in the extreme eastern part of France, within the limits of the modern department of Ain, and at the distance of only twelve miles from Geneva. It is a town of some note, situated at the foot of Mount St.

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* Vie de Messire Jean D'Aranthon D'Alex, Evêque de Geneve, Liv. 3d, ch. 4th, Ed. Lyons, 1699.

Claude, one of the summits which constitute the celebrated Alpine range, called the Jura mountains.

10. As it was evident, however, that the arrangements for so long a journey, and for so complete a change of circumstances, could not be fully made, until late in the autumn, it was determined to postpone her departure till the spring or summer of the next year. In the meanwhile, however, she was not idle. In addition to the cares and labors incident to her removal, she declined no labor, which the warmest Christian charity and fidelity required her to undertake for others; administering, as the case might demand, sometimes to their spiritual and sometimes to their temporal necessities.

11. In the winter of this year, the winter of 1680, which was very long and severe, there was a scarcity in France. It was so great, that, amid the dense population of Paris and its suburbs, it might perhaps be denominated a *famine.* Aroused by the cries of distress which she heard around her, Madame Guyon made every effort which her situation allowed, to relieve the many persons who stood in need. For a considerable time she distributed some hundreds of loaves of bread at her house every week, besides charities of a more private nature. In addition to this she made arrangements for a number of poor boys and girls, and kept them at work. God enabled her to do it.

12. God not only gave her strength and means to do it, but she adds, that he "gave such blessings to my alms, that I did not find that my family lost anything by it." "True charity," she remarks further, "instead of wasting or lessening the substance of the donor, blesses, increases, and multiplies it profusely. If men fully understood and believed this, how much that is now uselessly dissipated, would be given to the poor, which would scarcely bless those who might receive it more than those who might give."

13. During this period, namely, the time intervening between her decision to leave Paris and her departure in the succeeding summer, she was assiduous also, although in a somewhat private manner, for the spiritual good of others. She mentions a number of individuals, and one whole family in particular, whom she thinks she was the means of greatly benefitting in this respect. It is unnecessary perhaps to repeat her statements, as the cases were similar to many others to which she alludes in the course of her history; but they show, that the sentiment of benevolence, the principle of doing good, had taken strong and permanent possession of her mind. True Christianity, although it disclaims action in its own strength and its own way, may justly be described as operative. The righteous shall say unto the Saviour at the last day, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? *And the King shall answer and say unto them: Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*" *

14. As the day of her departure approached, she made every preparation which seemed to be proper and necessary. Some important arrangements were to be made in respect to her property, of which she regarded herself as merely the stewardess; and which, therefore, while she could not employ it in personal gratifications on the one hand, she could not wholly neglect on the other. What these arrangements were, she does not clearly specify; but they were undoubtedly such as would commend themselves to Christian truth and benevolence. In making them she did not forget the needy. She made such provision as seemed to be desirable,

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* Mat. xxv. 37-40.

for those of her friends and relatives, as well as for others, whom Providence had made especially dependent on her. Her two sons she placed in the care of persons, who would be likely to see every thing done, which could reasonably be expected to be done, for their morals and education. Her little daughter it was her intention to take with her.

15. But she experienced, at this juncture, some trials, both inward and outward, to which it may be proper briefly to allude here. Clear as the course which she had proposed to pursue had become to her own mind, and strongly as it was approved by many religious persons in whom she had confidence, there were others to whom it appeared objectionable. "One day," she says, "when I was thinking over my plans, I found myself looking at them in the human light rather than in God's light, and I found myself tempted and staggered. The thought arose, *perhaps I am mistaken.* At this moment an Ecclesiastic came in, who was in the habit of visiting at my house, and said to me very promptly, that the undertaking was rash and ill-advised. I confess, that I had some feelings of discouragement.

16. "But going to my Bible, to see what light I could find there, I opened at the forty-first chapter of Isaiah, fourteenth verse, as follows: 'Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel. I will help you, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.' And opening a little farther on, at the forty-third chapter, I read as follows: 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.' As I thus read, my heart was strengthened. My doubts fled away. Relying on God, what occasion had I to fear? I resolved to go, although I might appear a fool in the eyes of others;

regardless of the censures of those, who know not what it is to be a servant of God, and to receive and obey his orders." *

17. Her trial in regard to her children was very considerable; but she was enabled, through grace, entirely to surmount it. She loved them; "especially," she says, "my youngest son, whom I had strong reasons for loving. I saw him inclined to good, and everything seemed to favor the hopes I had conceived of him. I was not insensible to the risk of leaving him to another's education. My daughter I designed to take with me, though she was at this time ill of a very tedious fever. Providence was pleased, however, so to order it, that she recovered her health in season to take the journey with me. The ties with which God held me closely united to himself, were infinitely stronger than those of flesh and blood. The laws of my sacred marriage, in which I had given myself to the Lord, to be his in the most sacred and intimate relations, obliged me to give up all, to follow my spouse whithersoever it was his pleasure to call me after him. Though from time to time I had doubts, and trials of mind, before I went upon this religious mission, I ought to say, that, after my departure, I never doubted of its being God's will that I should go.

18. "And though men, who judge of things only according to the success which follows them, have taken occasion, from my subsequent disgraces and sufferings, to judge of my calling, and to run it down as error, illusion and imagination, it is that very persecution, and the multitude of strange crosses it has drawn upon me, (*of which this imprisonment which I now suffer is one*,†) which have confirmed me in

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* La Vie de Madame Guyon, Pt. i. chs. 28, 29.

† She wrote this when confined as a prisoner in the Convent of St. Marie, in Paris.

the certainty of its truth and validity. Nay, I am more than ever convinced, that the resignation which I have made of everything, is in pure obedience to the *divine will.* The Gospel effectually, in this point, shows itself to be true, which has promised to those that shall leave all for the love of God, 'an hundred fold in this life, *and persecutions also.*'

19. "And have not I infinitely more than an hundred fold, in so entire a possession as Thou, my God, hast taken of me; in that unshaken firmness which thou givest me in my sufferings; in that perfect tranquillity in the midst of a furious tempest, which assaults me on every side; in that unspeakable joy, enlargedness, and liberty, which I enjoy, at the very time of an imprisonment which is rigorous and severe? I have no desire that my imprisonment should end before the right time. I love my chains. Everything is equal to me, as I have no will of my own, but purely the love and will of Him who possesses me. My senses indeed have not any relish for such things; but my heart is separated from them, and borne over them; and my perseverance is not of myself, but of him who is my life; so that I can say with the apostle, '*It is no more I that live, but Jesus Christ that liveth in me.*' And if his life is in me, so my life is in him. It is he *in whom I live, and move, and have my being.*" *

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* Life of Madame Guyon, chap. xxix., Brooke's Translation.

CHAPTER XX.

July, 1681, *leaves Paris. Manner of leaving and reasons of it. Her companions. References to her little child, who makes crosses and fastens them to her mother's garments, and then weaves a crown for her. Stops at the town of Corbeil. Meets there the Franciscan, who had formerly been instrumental in her conversion. Conversation with him. Sails for Melun. Meditations on her situation. References to her poetry. Poem illustrative of her situation and feelings.*

She left Paris, as near as can now be ascertained, early in July, 1681. It is worthy of notice, however, as indicating the circumstances in which she was placed, that she did not leave by the customary public conveyances. Considerable opposition to her designs manifested itself in some quarters, which rendered it possible, at least, that efforts might be secretly and perhaps violently made to prevent her departure. Her half-brother, La Mothe, who seems to have felt that he had some claims, or at least some expectations, on her property, had influence in high places, especially with the archbishop of Paris, who had influence with the king of France. This influence it was not impossible that he might employ against her. That was not a period when much regard was paid to the liberty of the subject. Not unfrequently persons, and sometimes those who had given but little occasion for being so treated, were seized suddenly and unexpectedly, and were sent to the prison of Vincennes, or to the Bastile, by orders secretly and maliciously obtained.

2. Madame Guyon knew this; and at a later period of her life she had the experience of it. She thought it best, therefore, not to place herself in a situation, where any attempt of this kind could be made upon her. Accordingly she departed privately from Paris, in a boat on the river Seine; a method of conveyance which would be likely to escape notice and to elude pursuit. In July, 1681, she departed from Paris privately in this manner, — with her little daughter five years of age, — herself a widow, — attended only by a devout woman, whom she calls Sister Garnier, and with two female domestics; one of whom, I suppose, was the maid-servant, to whom God gave so much of her spirit, and who shared for many years her labors and imprisonments.

3. She went forth with a definite object before her; but still with so much uncertainty attending it, that she might say in some sense, that she went forth "not knowing whither she went." She was now in the thirty-fourth year of her age, and had been trained to the Christian warfare by a discipline, inward as well as outward, which eminently fitted her both for duty and trial. Home and friends she might be said to know no more; she became a representative of what she aptly calls the "apostolic life," with the world for her country, and all mankind for her brethren. From this time also we may number what she calls her "years of banishment." Wanderings, persecutions, imprisonments, exile, were her portion.

4. Alone upon the waters, she adored and rejoiced in God in silence. Still there was something within her, which whispered intimations of sadness to her heart. Her situation seemed to resemble that of the apostle Paul, when he went up, for the last time, to Jerusalem. "I go bound," he says, "in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things

that shall befall me there; save that the Holy Ghost witnesses in every city, saying, *that bonds and afflictions abide me.*" Her little daughter, afterwards the Countess of Vaux and by a second marriage the Duchess of Sully, then a little child, sat in the boat, and employed herself in cutting the leaves and twigs, which she had gathered on the river banks, or as they had floated by on the water, into the shape of crosses. In this way she made a great number; and then, apparently unconscious of what she was doing, she went and fastened many of them to the garments of her mother. Her mother, at first, did not particularly notice what she was doing; but directing her attention to it soon afterwards, she found herself almost literally covered with crosses, which her little daughter had thus made. Having borne the cross in times past, and seeing but little prospect of a different result in future, she could not help looking on the act of her child as a sort of symbol and foreshadowing of what she would be called to endure. And this seems to have been the view of one of her companions, the good woman whom she denominates Sister Garnier, who remarked to Madame Guyon, "The doings of this child appear to be mysterious." And turning to the child, she said, "My pretty child, give me some crosses too." "No," she said; "they are all for my dear mother." But she gave her one to stop her importunity.

5. But what was the surprise of Madame Guyon, when she saw her daughter a little afterwards weaving together a crown of leaves and river flowers. When she had completed it, she came and insisted on placing the crown upon her head; saying, "*After the cross you shall be crowned.*" This perfected the symbol. First the trial, and then the reward; the night of affliction succeeded by the dawning and the noon-day of joy. First the Cross, and then the Crown. This gave to the transaction, though the doings

of a little child, the character of a sign of Providence. And though "bonds and afflictions" awaited her, she could add, with the apostle, that "*none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto me, so that I might finish my course with joy.*"*

6. Their boat stopped for a short time at the town of Corbeil; a pleasant town of some size, seventeen miles from Paris. Her stay was short. But she met there the pious Franciscan, whose conversation had been so much blessed to her in the early part of her religious history. She had kept up a written correspondence with him for many years; and had long looked upon him as one of the most experienced and valuable of her religious friends. Their interview recalled many pleasant recollections, and was calculated to fill their hearts with gratitude. She related to him the dealings of God with her, which had resulted in her present design; a design formed, as she hoped, under a divine guidance. In the accomplishment of this design, she was now on her way to seek out and to labor with the rude inhabitants in the extreme eastern part of France. The Franciscan, now advanced in years and mature in judgment, approved her plans, and invoked the divine blessing upon them.

7. Once more upon the waters of the Seine, she saw with pleasure the impulse of oar and sail which bore her onward to Melun. The tree grew upon the banks; the flower bent its stalk to the waters; the breeze wafted odors; the birds sung in the branches. But there was nothing which she could dissociate from God; in *all* she heard God's voice; in *all* she saw God's glory. She saw the husbandman as he went to his home, his cottage beneath the trees on the river's bank; and she could not help thinking, in the secrets of her

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* Acts, xx. 24.

heart, that earth had no home for her. But though a pilgrim, she was not alone; though homeless, she had a habitation not made with hands. In God, whose presence became to her a reality, wherever her foot trod and wherever her eye wandered, she found all embodied, and far more than all embodied, which she had ever found in home or country, in friends or kindred.

8. The state of her mind, as it existed at this period, is found delineated in her Poems, as well as in her Autobiography. Perhaps we shall find no more fitting occasion than the present, for the insertion of the following beautiful stanzas, which are evidently drawn from her own experience. No person but a Christian of confirmed and thorough piety could have written them. Poetry is the *heart expressed;* or if this be thought not to be strictly true, on the ground that this statement does not include enough, I think we can fully acquiesce in the reverse of the proposition, namely, that there is no poetry where there is no heart. The poetry of Madame Guyon, whatever defects may be thought to attach to it in some respects, has the merit of expressing precisely what she *was*, and what she *felt*. The stanzas which follow, conform to her situation as it then was, both inward and outward. They are emphatically the sentiments of the day and the hour; the spirit and voice of the world's wanderer and the world's benefactor; who, detached from the ties and influences of a partial locality, loses the earthly in the divine, — whose home and centre is in God alone.

GOD EVERYWHERE TO THE SOUL THAT LOVES HIM.

Oh Thou by long experience tried,
Near whom no grief can long abide;
My Lord! How full of sweet content,
I pass my years of banishment.

All scenes alike engaging prove,
To souls impressed with sacred love;
Where'er they dwell, they dwell in Thee,
In heaven, in earth, or on the sea.

To me remains nor place nor time;
My country is in every clime;
I can be calm and free from care
On any shore, since God is there.

While place we seek, or place we shun,
The soul finds happiness in none;
But with a God to guide our way,
'Tis equal joy to go or stay.

Could I be cast where Thou art not,
That were indeed a dreadful lot;
But regions none remote I call,
Secure of finding God in all.

My country, Lord, art Thou alone;
No other can I claim or own;
The point where all my wishes meet,
My law, my love; life's only sweet.

I hold by nothing here below;
Appoint my journey, and I go;
Though pierced by scorn, oppress by pride,
I feel the good,—feel nought beside.

No frowns of men can hurtful prove
To souls on fire with heavenly love;
Though men and devils both condemn,
No gloomy days arise for them.

Ah then! to His embrace repair;
My soul, thou art no stranger there;
There love divine shall be thy guard,
And peace and safety thy reward.

CHAPTER XXI.

Arrives at the city of Lyons. Remarks. Proceeds from Lyons to Anneci, in Savoy, the residence of Bishop D'Aranthon. Her remarks on this journey. Religious services at the tomb of St. Francis de Sales. Arrives at Gex on the 23d of July, 1681. Death of her Director, M. Bertot. Appointment of La Combe in his place. Her inward religious state. Benevolent efforts. New views of the nature of the mission which God now imposed upon her. Sanctification by faith. Visit to Gex. Her personal labors with La Combe. Favorable results.

THE boat stopped at Melun, a pleasant town, twenty-five miles south-east of Paris. Immediately on arriving there, she took passage, with her companions, — with the exception of Sister Garnier who stopped at Melun,— in one of the public conveyances, that travelled between Melun and Lyons. The city of Lyons, formerly the second city of France for beauty, commerce and opulence, is situated at the confluence of the Rhone and Soane, two hundred and twenty miles south-east of Paris. Distinguished as it was for its public structures, besides other objects of interest such as are most likely to be found in the most celebrated cities, she spent no longer time in it, than was necessary to recover a little from the exhaustion of her journey, having suffered much from fatigue. She had arrived at that state of religious experience, when she could not indulge the principle of curiosity, innocent as it is generally supposed to be in its action, except in subordination to the claims of religious duty and of God's glory.

2. From Lyons she took the most direct and expeditious route to Anneci, in Savoy, the residence of Bishop d'Aranthon, with whom she had recently formed an acquaintance at Paris. Speaking of this journey, she says, "It was very fatiguing. The toils of the day were followed by almost sleepless nights. My daughter, a very tender child and only five years of age, got scarcely any sleep, perhaps three hours a night. And yet we both bore so great a fatigue without falling sick by the way. My daughter showed no uneasiness, and made no complaint. At other times half this fatigue, or even the want of rest which I endured, would have thrown me into a fit of sickness. God only knows both the sacrifices which he induced me to make, and the joy of my heart in offering up everything to him. Had I been possessed of kingdoms and empires, I should have offered them all up with the greatest joy, in order to give him the highest marks and evidences of love.

3. "As we passed from town to town, I made it my practice, when we arrived at the public inn, to go into the nearest church, and spend my time in acts of devotion, till I was summoned to my meals. And when we were travelling, I did not cease to pray inwardly and to commune with God, although those who were with me, did not perceive, or at least did not comprehend it. My communion with God, and my strong faith in him, had a tendency to sustain my spirits and to render me cheerful. Disengaged from the world, and devoted exclusively to God's work and will, I found myself uttering the pleasure of my heart aloud in songs of praise. We passed through some dangerous places, especially between Lyons and Chamberri. And at one time our carriage broke down. But God wonderfully preserved

us. He seemed to be to us *a pillar of fire by night, and a pillar of cloud by day.*"

4. She arrived at Anneci, the residence, as already stated, of Bishop d'Aranthon, on the 21st of July, 1681. The next day, some religious services, which had special reference to her arrival, were performed by the bishop at the tomb of St. Francis de Sales, who was buried at this place. The memory of this truly pious man and distinguished writer, was exceedingly dear to her. So much had she read his writings, and so deeply studied and imbibed his views and temper, that she seemed to feel a special union with him, and to hold, as it were, with his departed spirit, "the holy intercourse of friend with friend; united with him in Christ, and with Christ in God, who binds all his people, both the dead and the living, in one immortal tie."

5. This day, the 22d of July, was a day which, since the year 1668, when she first knew the blessedness of believing, she had never permitted to pass by without special observance. On this day, nine years before, namely, in the year 1672, she had repeated her personal consecration, and had given herself to God in the most solemn manner, without reservation either of purpose or of time, and with the *formality of a written act.* It is to this act she refers when she says, "It was there, at the tomb of St. Francis de Sales, that I renewed my spiritual marriage with my Redeemer; *as I did every year on this day.*" In the renewal of her vows on this interesting anniversary, and in dwelling on the sacredness of what she terms her spiritual nuptials, in which she had the faith to believe that God made himself a reconciled and joyful party, she says, that she was refreshed by the recollection of the striking passage in the prophet Hosea, "*And I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving*

kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord." *

6. On the 23d of July, she continued her journey, making a short stop in the city of Geneva at the house of the French consul, where religious services were performed while she was present. She speaks of it as having been a day of much spiritual consolation. "It seemed to me," she says, "as if God united himself to me in a powerful and special manner." Near the close of the same day, she passed again within the limits of France, which she had left in going to Anneci and Geneva; and, making her way along the base of the Jura mountains, reached the town of Gex, where she proposed to reside for a time. She took up her residence at the house of the Sisters of Charity, who received her very kindly.

7. It may be in place to refer here to an event, which, in the order of time, might properly have been mentioned before. I refer to the death of M. Bertot, whom, as her authorized Director in spiritual things, Madame Guyon had consulted for many years, and in whom she placed great confidence. He seems to have been a man of learning and piety, characterized by a high degree of caution. She says of him, that he was retired and difficult of access; and not at all inclined to think favorably of any religious experience, which partook much of the marvellous and extraordinary. Nevertheless, on being consulted by her in relation to her departure from Paris and her mission to the eastern part of France, he gave his approval of it. A short time after she saw him on this subject, he was taken ill and died. His works, containing some letters of Madame Guyon on spiritual subjects, were published after his death.†

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* Hosea, chap. ii. 19; 20.

† See Lettres Chrêtiennes et Spirituelles de Madame Guyon, Tome V p 464. Lond. Ed. 1768.

8. By going to Gex, which was within the limits of the diocese of Bishop d'Aranthon, she naturally came under his spiritual care. And having learned the death of Bertot, one of the first acts of the bishop, after her arrival at Gex, was to assign to her a Director in his place. The person, whom he selected for this responsible situation, was Father La Combe, whom we have already had occasion to mention. The selection, although made, it is quite possible, without any consultation with Madame Guyon, nevertheless met her views and wishes. Bertot's views and experience were not altogether accordant with hers; and although it was done with the best intentions, he sometimes took a course which seemed unnecessarily to perplex and restrict the growth of her inward life. Her knowledge of La Combe's religious history led her to anticipate a more favorable direction and influence from him.

9. Madame Guyon speaks of the early part of her residence at Gex as being characterized by sweet and happy peace of mind and the most intimate communion with God. She mentions, that a number of times she awoke at midnight, with such a presence and possession of God in her soul, that she could no longer sleep, but arose and spent hours in prayer and praise and divine communion. On one of these occasions, her exercises were connected with the recollection of the passage of Scripture, "Lo, I am come to do thy will, O God;" a passage which was brought to her mind very forcibly, and so applied to her own situation and her own feelings as to cause the most devout and pleasing reflections. "It was accompanied," she says, "with the most pure, penetrating, and powerful communication of grace that I had ever experienced."

10. "And here I may remark," she adds, "that, although my soul was truly renovated, so much so in the exercise of its pure and holy love, as to know nothing but God alone,

yet it was not in that strength and immutability of renovation in which it has since been. [That is to say, it was subject, from time to time, to severe temptations; it was sometimes assailed, and perhaps shaken, by the storms to which it was exposed.] To speak properly, it was a beginning life and a rising day, which goes on increasing to that full and bright meridian, which no cloud darkens and no night follows." And this, I suppose, agrees with the more common or general experience of those who have been in this state. If it can be truly said of them, that they are persons whose hearts are wholly given to God, and who are perfected in love, it is still true that they may be subject to heavy temptations, and that their faith is liable to be shaken. Time, with prayer and watchfulness, gives strength. Every day brings them more closely and fixedly into divine union. Till, at length, the soul, strong by grace and strong by habit, becomes established, as Madame Guyon intimates, *in comparative immutability.*

11. She was now on a field of labor remote from the noise and the temptations of cities, to which she had looked forward with great interest. She had come without any prescribed or stipulated course of action before her. But this was not of great importance. He who has the heart of a true missionary, will find something which can be done benevolently and religiously, wherever he goes; and that too, without the formalities and aids of antecedent arrangements. God opens the way to those that love him. This she always found to be true; and accordingly, in connection with other religious persons, with whom she became associated at Gex, she endeavored to do good to the poor, the ignorant and suffering, as opportunities presented themselves, especially in giving religious instruction.

12. The full details of her labors, which could have continued in some of these forms only for a short time and to a

limited extent, she does not give; and perhaps did not think it desirable to give them. She merely alludes to them, from time to time, incidentally and briefly. One plan of benevolent operation which she entertained, was not carried into effect; at least not in the way in which she first contemplated; but it shows her dispositions. She says she was skilled in making various ointments and in applying them to wounds, and thought she might be very beneficial to those who were afflicted in that way, especially the poor. And at one time she contemplated devoting herself wholly to benevolent measures of this kind, — influenced probably by the consideration, that benevolence is one in its nature, though diversified in its acts; and that unity of effort, in a particular form of benevolence, will result in more good than benevolent efforts divided among many objects. This plan, however, which will be readily appreciated by those who are acquainted with the methods of benevolent action in the Catholic church, was not carried into effect; and it was obviously her expectation, as a general thing, to labor very much as she had labored in times past; praying, instructing, visiting the sick, and giving to the needy; with the simple difference, that now her labors were to be performed in a different situation and among a different class of people. But though she kept no specific record of what she did, and did not think it advisable to do it, her labors and charities were such, both in the degree and the manner, that they attracted the special attention of Bishop D'Aranthon, who wrote her a polite letter, expressive of his gratitude.

13. But it was not long before a new voice began to utter itself in her heart. Some might, perhaps, designate it as the voice of nature; but there is much more reason, it seems to me, for regarding it as the voice of God, who speaks, and cannot help speaking, in the thoughts and decisions of the sanctified heart. And the thought, or the voice, which God

puts within us, is often at variance with mere human wisdom. In more than one sense can it be said, that "God's thoughts are not as our thoughts." Keeping his own counsel, and developing only a part of his providences at one time, he not unfrequently leads his people in a way which they know not. And in the events which we are now relating, it is certainly not too much to say, that he had his purpose in every thing which had taken place; but as the appointed hour had not yet come, he had not fully disclosed it. In God's view the *time* of the thing is as essential as the thing itself. It was his purpose, from this time onward, to lead her by faith and not by *sight*, and therefore, in all cases, to hide his object from her outward vision, till faith had accomplished its appropriate work in her heart. And accordingly, in sending her from Paris to the foot of the Jura mountains, among a poor and unknown people, he imposed a mission upon her which she did not know, and which he did not design that she should know, — a burden which she understood afterwards, but not *now*.

14. The voice inwardly, in the form of a new and imperious conviction, began to speak. There was something within her which seemed to say, that this was not the work, or rather was not the special and great work, which God had called her to perform. Her mind was perplexed, and she was at a loss what course to take. At this time Father La Combe came to Gex. His usual place of residence was at Thonon, a town about twenty-four miles from Gex, situated on the other side of the Leman or Genevan lake, where he had charge of a congregation of the religious sect or Order of the Barnabites. She mentioned the uncertainty and perplexity which she felt, to La Combe. We have already had occasion to say, that, by the appointment of Bishop D'Aranthon, La Combe had been constituted, in accordance with the arrangements of the Catholic church,

her spiritual Director. She was naturally led, therefore, to consult him in this emergency. On learning her state of mind, he advised her to set apart a season of special supplication for the purpose of ascertaining more definitely what the will of the Lord might be. But on the examination of her feelings, and on endeavoring to carry this advice into effect, she thought it best to leave the subject to the decisions of Providence. In her present state of experience, her mind rested calmly and unchangeably in one truth and in one form of religious exercise, — THY WILL BE DONE.

15. The time and manner and degree of manifesting God's will, constitute a part of the will itself. God never has failed, and never will fail to make known his will, in his own time and way, to those who have true and unreserved hearts to *do* his will. In fact, his will exists in his present providences; they are the letters in which it is written. And the heart that perfectly corresponds to God's providences, perfectly corresponds to his will. It was God's will that she should go, *not knowing whither she went.* A cloud rested upon her path. *The seal of her mission was not yet broken.* What could she do then but wait, adore, and be silent. And this was her answer, practically at least, to the suggestions and advice of La Combe, — a man of true religious experience, but still much less advanced than herself. "God," she thought in her heart, "will not fail to indicate to me what course I should take, when, on the one hand, he finds me ready to do his commands, and when on the other he is ready to make his commands known. I leave, therefore, everything with him, and with the mighty mind of his providences. THY WILL BE DONE."

16. The work which the Lord had assigned her, and which she did not yet understand, was wholly different from what, in her limited view of things, she had anticipated. God often works thus. It is often the case, that He forms

a sentiment in the bosom, and causes it to be uttered, of which he who is the instrument of its utterance, does not know the full import. And still less does he understand the hidden influences of divine providence, which have placed the burden upon his heart, rather than upon the heart of another, and have caused it to be proclaimed at the appropriate time. He is a prophet of God; and, like most true prophets, is so absorbed in the object as to be hardly conscious of his own relations to it; so that, with the simplicity of a little child, he utters truths, which are so broad and effective in their application, that they affect the happiness of nations, and take hold of time and eternity.

17. Thus at the foot of the Alps, when she thought her great business was to make ointments, and cut linen, and bind up wounds, and tend the sick, and teach poor children the alphabet and the catechism, (important vocations to those whom Providence calls to them,) she uttered a word from her burdened heart, in her *simplicity*, without knowing or thinking how widely it would affect the interests of humanity, or through how many distant ages it would be re-echoed. And that word was, Sanctification by Faith.

18. Both the thing and the manner of the thing struck those who heard her with astonishment. Sanctification itself was repugnant; and sanctification by *faith* inexplicable. In the Protestant Church, it would have been hardly tolerable; but in the Catholic Church, which is characterized, much more than the Protestant, by what may be termed ceremonial observances, the toleration of a sentiment which ascribes the highest results of inward experience *to faith alone*, was impossible. So that, instead of being regarded as a humble and devout Catholic, as she supposed herself to be, she found herself suddenly denounced as a heretic. But the Word was in her heart, formed there by infinite wisdom; and in obedience to that deep and sanctified conviction

which constitutes the soul's inward voice, she uttered it; uttered it *now*, and uttered it *always*, "though bonds and imprisonments awaited her."

19. She used discretion, however; but not hypocrisy. She did not esteem it advisable to propose the highest results of the religious life to those who had hardly made a beginning, and who had not, as yet, experienced the blessing of justification. But when she met with those who believed in Christ as a Saviour from the penalty of a violated law, she seemed to be impelled by a sort of religious instinct, originating in her own blessed experience, to recommend Him also as a Saviour from present transgression, as a Saviour who can and does communicate his own spirit of truth, meekness, gentleness, purity, and holiness of heart to those who, in the spirit of entire self-renunciation, look to him believingly for these great blessings. She said what was in her, in God's time, without variation and without fear, scarcely knowing what she did.

20. Her religious friend and correspondent, the Franciscan whom she met at Corbeil, in her journey from Paris, had made some suggestions on the course which she might find it expedient to pursue. He seems to have understood the state of things at Gex, especially among that class of persons entitled the New Catholics, with whom it was thought probable that she might be called particularly to labor. "He mentioned," she says, "a number of things about them, in order to show me that my views on religious experience, and that my experience itself, were quite different from what I should be likely to find among them. He gave me to understand, that I must be very cautious in letting them know that I walked in the *inward path;* that is to say, in a life which is inward, and which rests upon *faith;* assuring me, if I were not so, that I could reasonably expect nothing but persecutions from them."

21. But it was difficult for her, in the simplicity and fullness of her heart, to understand and receive this advice, although coming from a very good man, but one who was not inwardly where she was. The way of God had become so clear to her, that she did not readily perceive how others, in the foolishness of the natural heart, might stumble at it. And if they did stumble at it, was it not the way of God still? And ought it not to be proclaimed as such? At any rate, with a will *renounced*, she had neither the inclination nor the power to make any stipulations with worldly prudence. "It is in vain," she remarks, in connection with this conversation, "to contrive to hide ourselves from the blow, when God sees it best for us to suffer, and especially when our wills are utterly resigned to him, and totally passed into his. O Saviour, king of divine lovers! How didst thou submit to the blow, yea, how didst thou smite, as it were, upon thyself, in submission to thy Father's holy will! I am thine, solemnly devoted to the one thing of being like thee, of being conformed to thee. Thou didst suffer; and I will suffer with thee. I refuse nothing. If it be thy will, my own hand shall strike the wound into my own bosom."

22. And in accordance with these views, she said, on proper occasions, what she had to say without concealment. And, although she did not understand it at the time of her first coming, it was now evident that God, for this very purpose, had sent her there. Everything, as we have had repeated occasion to remark, has its time and place; and God alone knows the truth of either. God sent her abroad, that she might preach the more effectually at home. He placed her at the circumference, that beginning, not "at Jerusalem," but at the furthest place from Jerusalem, she might operate back from the circumference to the centre. The woman's voice that uttered itself in self-devoted banishment, at the foot of the Jura mountains, was heard, in due

time, in the high places of Paris. When she had spoken, her eyes were opened in relation to her position. Some believed and rejoiced; some disbelieved and reproached her, and were angry. Truly enough, without specifically intending it, and yet in God's will, she had commenced the "apostolic life," by proclaiming the Gospel in the highest form of its results; and either now or in prospect, with sorrows and with persecutions attending her.

23. At this juncture, of those, whose learning and position in society rendered their concurrence particularly important, one individual only stood by her, both in sentiment and action, — Father La Combe. Providence favored and supported her here. He was her spiritual Director; he understood her principles and experience; he had something, although as yet lingering far behind her, of the same thorough inward life. On his return from Gex to Thonon, he invited her to go with him. This invitation she accepted, as the excursion would be favorable to her enfeebled health, and would be entirely within the limits of what she considered the present sphere of her labors. Instead of taking the route of Geneva, they decided to take the nearest way across the Leman lake. Boats were continually crossing, which offered them a passage. Embarked in her little vessel, it may not be out of place to remark, that she was now on the wave of those waters, and in the bosom of those mountains, which philosophers and poets have delighted to behold, and have loved to celebrate.

> "Clear, placid Leman! Thy contrasted lake,
> With the wide world I dwelt in, is a thing
> Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
> Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring."

It was in sight of the place where she now was, that Gibbon and Voltaire subsequently resided and wrote. These very waters, and the cliffs and cottages and snow-crowned summits that hung over them, have since inspired the genius of Rousseau and Byron. With deep feeling they admired these wonderful works; *she*, with no less admiration of the works, admired them still more, as the mighty mirror of the God who made them. *They* drew their inspiration from the mountains, which, though formed of adamant, must sooner or later crumble and pass away; *she* drew her inspiration from the God of the mountains, who endures forever.

24. Before they reached the eastern side of the lake, upon which Thonon is situated, one of those sudden and fierce storms arose, to which this body of water is subject. The dark clouds wrapped them; their little boat dashed violently upon the waves; the boatmen were in consternation. But to her the storm brought no terror. Faith, which places God in the centre, — God, who is Love under all circumstances, in the storm as well as in the sunshine, — had equalized all. Calmly she awaited the result. God protected the little company and they arrived safe at their place of destination.

25. Twelve days she staid at Thonon, at the Ursuline Convent. A portion of the time she spent in retirement, separate from the world, but not alone. God was with her. But she never forgot the mission which she now felt was committed to her, — namely, the proclamation, to all who bear the name of Christ, of Holiness based upon Faith, as their present privilege and possession. It was to accomplish her for this work that God had not only established her position in society, and had given her vast powers of thought, but, what was still more necessary, had subjected her inmost nature to the terrible discipline of his providences, and to the flaming scrutiny of his Holy Spirit. When God, in his providences, gave the command, she spoke now, and always.

26. At this time her mind was very much taken up with

the spiritual condition of La Combe. Nominally, La Combe, in the fulfilment of human instrumentalities and arrangements, was her Director. But really, and in the fulfilment of God's appointment, the spiritual direction was with the one to whom God had actually given the deepest experience and the largest measures of his grace. It was well, however, that the relation in which they stood to each other, gave them frequent opportunities of conversation, which they might not otherwise have enjoyed. He was prepared to listen to her, independently of other considerations, because she had been the instrument, many years before, of his advancement in religion, if not of his first religious experience. She saw that he had much; but she felt that he ought to have more.

27. His religious state, as she has delineated it, was precisely this. *Intellectually* he received the doctrine of sanctification, as something to be experienced *now*. On this point he did not doubt; and he seems to have aimed sincerely at the inward realization of what he believed and felt he ought to possess. His prayers, his resolutions, his efforts, attended by divine grace, were not in vain. He received much, but he had not received all. His experience failed, in having too large a share of the apparitional and emotional. He attached an undue value to sights and sounds, and to emotions of mere joy, considered as the exclusive, or the principal evidences of religion. It was obviously very hard for him to walk in the narrow way of faith alone.

28. "Father La Combe," she says, "having walked a long time by *testimonies*, as he called them, that is to say, by *sensible* marks and signs, could not easily remove himself from that way of living, and enter upon a better one. In the support of his religious hopes he was too much disposed, as it seemed to me, to seek for those things which satisfy human sense and human reason. Hard was it for him to

walk in the poor and low and despised way of entire self-renunciation and of simple faith. I felt for him; I labored with him. No one can tell what it cost me, before he was formed according to the will of God. It was hard for him to die entirely to self. I did not grieve when I saw him suffer. I had such a desire for his spiritual progress and perfection, that I could willingly have wished him all the crosses and afflictions imaginable, that might have conduced to this great and blessed end. He lay like a heavy burden upon my spirit. I had no resource but to carry it to the Lord, who had placed it upon me. To him I made my complaint, who graciously encouraged me, both on this subject and on that entire dependence on himself which he gave me, which was such, that I was like a new-born infant."

29. Her efforts were not in vain. He who inspired them blessed them. From this time we may date, between La Combe and herself, a union of spirit, founded on a similarity of experience. He renounced all, that he might receive all. He wanted no other signs or tokens of his acceptance, than the declaration of God's words, that all who give themselves to him to do his will in faith, are safe. He could not but foresee, that doctrinal views so different from those which were generally entertained, and inward experience so variant from that which characterized the mass of Christians, must occasion remark, and would probably excite permanent and deep opposition. But whatever might be before him, he had grace and strength sufficient to leave all in the Lord's hands.

30. Recognizing in Madame Guyon, the instrument, under God, of his own spiritual renovation and progress, it is not surprising that he entertained for her those sincere sentiments of respect, and of Christian affection, which both her natural and Christian character seemed justly to claim.

From this time onward, their history is, to some extent, linked together. Their views of Christian experience were the same. They had a common object, which they endeavored to promote, both by their personal efforts and writings. Believing that the gospel had power to purify and perfect, as well as to save from the infliction of punishment, they did what they could to realize this great result, and to make their fellow-beings *holy*. In their common trials, as well as in their common labors, they sympathized with each other, and endeavored to strengthen the latter, and to alleviate the former, by a written correspondence, mutually carried on, for many years. They met with rebukes, with opposition, with imprisonments. But God, who had given them the promise, was with them to the end.

CHAPTER XXII.

Account of the hermit of Thonon, called Anselm. Her return from Thonon to Gex. Thrown from a horse and injured. Labors at Gex. Illustration of them in the case of a poor woman, whom she was the means of spiritually benefiting. Sermon of La Combe on Holiness. La Combe called to account, on the ground of preaching heretical doctrine. Views and measures of Bishop d'Aranthon. Proposes to Madame Guyon to give up her property and become prioress of a Religious House at Gex. Her refusal. Remarkable conversation between d'Aranthon and La Combe, in relation to Madame Guyon's course. Remarks upon d'Aranthon's course and upon his character. He gradually takes ground in opposition to Madame Guyon. Some account of her inward experience at this time.

"At Thonon," she says, "I found a hermit, whom the people called Anselm. He was a person of the most extraordinary sanctity that had appeared for some time. He was from the city of Geneva; and God had wonderfully drawn him from thence, at twelve years of age. With the permission of the cardinal, who was at that time Archbishop of Aix, in Provence, he had taken the habit of hermit of St. Augustine, at the age of nineteen. This man and another person lived together in a little hermitage, which they had prepared for themselves, where they saw nobody but such as came to visit them in their solitary place. He had lived twelve years in this hermitage. He seldom ate any thing but pulse, prepared with salt and sometimes with oil; with the exception that three times a week he made his meals of bread and water. He wore for a shirt a coarse hair cloth, and lodged on the bare ground. He was a man of great piety, living in a continual state of prayer, and in the greatest humility. He had been the instrument, in God's hands, of many remarkable things.

"This good hermit, who had been acquainted with Father La Combe for some time, and who had learned something of me, seemed to have a clear perception of the designs of God in relation to us. God had showed him, as he assured us, that we were both destined, in his providence, for the guidance and aid of souls; but that this mission of God would not be fulfilled in us, without our experiencing at the same time various and strange crosses."

2. At the expiration of twelve days she returned from Thonon to Gex, by the way of Geneva, — a longer route, but which had the advantage of avoiding the exposures of an open boat on the lake. At Geneva she called again at the French consul's; and as no immediate means of conveyance presented itself, he proposed to her to complete the remainder of her journey, only ten miles, on horseback; and offered for this purpose one of his own horses. "I had some difficulty," she remarks, "in accepting this proposal, as I was not much acquainted with riding on horseback. The consul assuring me, however, that the horse was very gentle and that there was no danger, I ventured to mount him. There was a sort of smith standing by, who looked at me with a wild, haggard look. This man, just as I had got fairly seated upon the animal, took it into his head, to strike him with a heavy blow upon the back, which made him start very suddenly. The result was, that I was thrown upon the ground violently; falling upon my temple, and injuring two of my teeth and the cheek-bone. I was so much stunned and hurt, that I could not proceed immediately; but after

resting awhile and recovering myself, I took another horse, and with a rider beside me, to render any necessary assistance, I proceeded on my way."

3. At Gex, to which she thus safely returned, she continued to labor, as God gave her opportunity. Among those, with whom she became acquainted there, was a poor woman who came to Gex from some place in the neighboring country. She seems to have been a religious woman, in the common acceptation of the term, and even eminently so. "She was one," says Madame Guyon, "on whom the Lord had conferred very singular graces. She was in such high religious reputation in the place from which she came, that she passed there for a saint. Our Lord brought her to me, in order that she might understand and see the difference between that religion which consists in the possession of spiritual endowments and gifts, and that which consists in the possession of the Giver."

4. This woman, with whom she thought she might profitably labor, passed through the same struggle and experienced the same blessing which others experienced; no longer a great Christian by being great, but by being little; no longer great in her own eyes because she had experienced much, but great in the eyes of God, because she had become nothing in herself. Instead of seeing God in dreams and visions, which placed him in the past or future, she now saw him in the unfailing mirror of the present moment. Instead of looking chiefly for consolations, and judging of the amount of her religion by the amount of her joy, her true and chief consolation was in enduring and doing God's will; accepting, with an equal and thankful mind, the cloud and the sunshine, the suffering and the pleasure.

Of this propitious result God was pleased to make Madame Guyon the instrument. And this case illustrates the nature of a portion of her labors at this time. She endeavored to establish and instil permanent principles of practical Christianity; believing, as she did, that true Christianity, considered in its renovating and sanctifying relations, does not consist in having God's gifts merely, but chiefly and especially in having God himself in the soul by a perfect union with his will. She felt herself particularly called upon to point out this difference, namely, between possessing the gifts of God and possessing God himself; between *emotional experience*, which feeds upon what is *given*, both good and bad, and *volitional* experience, which feeds upon what *is*, namely, upon God's will alone; or what is the same thing, upon "*every word which proceedeth out of his mouth.*" And on the basis of this distinction, she sometimes intimates, that the doctrines of sanctification, or of inward holy living, may be reduced, for the most part, to the two great principles of self-renunciation on the one hand, and of perfect union with the divine will on the other. He, who has nothing in himself, has all in God.

5. It was about this time that Father La Combe was called to preach on some public occasion. The new doctrine, as it was termed, was not altogether a secret. Public curiosity had become excited. He chose for his text the passage in Psalm xlv. 13. "*The king's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold.*"

What we have to say in regard to his exposition of the passage, is partly conjectural; but there probably is no doubt that by the king he understood *Christ;* by the king's daughter, the *church.* His doctrine was, whatever might be true in regard to men's original depravity, that those who are truly given to Christ and are in full harmony with him, are delivered from it; that is to say, are "all glorious within." Like Christ, they love God with a love free from selfishness, with *pure* love. Like Christ, they are come to do the will of the Father. Christ is formed in them. They not only have faith in Christ, and faith in God through Christ, but as the result of this faith, they have Christ's disposition. They are now in a situation to say of themselves individually, in the language of the Apostle Paul, "I live; and yet not I; *but Christ liveth in me.*" So that they are one with Christ, and through Christ are one with God; and being in this divine unity, and continually drawing strength from a divine source, they reflect the divine image.

6. He did not maintain that all Christians are really the subjects of this advanced state of Christian experience; but endeavored to show, that this is a *possible* state; that, however intense human depravity may be, the grace of God has power to overcome it; that the example of Christ, the full and rich promises, and even the commands, give encouragement to effort, and confidence in ultimate victory. And without making allusions to himself, or to the remarkable woman whose experience and instructions had revived the doctrine of present sanctification, now almost forgotten, although not unknown to the pious of former times, he could not hesitate to maintain that there *have been*, that there *may be*, and that there *are*, truly *holy* hearts in this depraved world. On this basis, and in Christ's name, he preached HOLINESS; not merely as a thing to be proclaimed, but to be experienced; not merely as a theme of pulpit declamation, but as a matter of personal realization.

7. Great was the consternation when it was found, that men were not merely *required* to be holy, but, what is practically a different thing, were *expected* to be holy. The requisition was admitted; but the belief of its practical possibility, and the expectation of the fulfilment of that possibility, which would imply a close scrutiny into the irregular lives of many, were rejected as visionary and condemned as heretical. La Combe, accordingly, although he was a man whose learning and eloquence entitled him to no small degree of consideration, was called to account.

8. When this sermon was preached, there was an ecclesiastic present, of considerable standing, who had much influence with Bishop d'Aranthon. This man not only declared that the sermon was full of errors, but, conscious perhaps of some irregularities, which the doctrine of practical holiness might not easily tolerate, he took the position that it was preached against himself personally. Certain it is, whether influenced by zeal for the church or by enmity to La Combe, he drew up eight propositions, expressive, as he alleged, of sentiments which ought not to pass unnoticed.

Madame Guyon asserts, that he inserted in these propositions statements or sentiments which La Combe had not advanced, and that he adjusted them, in their relation to each other, as maliciously as possible. Preparing them to suit himself, he sent them to one of his friends at Rome, in order that their heretical character might be ascertained by the proper ecclesiastical authorities there, and that the author of them might feel, in due season, the discriminating and repressive hand of the Inquisition. No formal condemnation, however, was pronounced. Probably the authorities at Rome, watchful as they generally are in the matter of heretical tendencies, did not consider the movements of an ecclesiastic as yet almost unknown, and residing in a remote and obscure place, as threatening any very great evils, even if considerably divergent from the strict line of Catholic orthodoxy. La Combe escaped this time.

9. The things which were taking place, reached the ear and attracted the notice of the good Bishop d'Aranthon. He had the sagacity to perceive, whatever might be true of La Combe, that the responsibility of this movement, which both excited his curiosity and alarmed his fears, rested chiefly upon Madame Guyon. He did not hesitate to express his sincere regard for her talents and virtues; but he could not

conceal from himself the fact, that her piety and intellectual ascendency rendered her opinions the more dangerous, if they were not true. He determined, therefore, — and it would seem, from some remarks made, that he did it after considerable consultation with some of his ecclesiastics, — that she should not continue to exert her labors and influence within the limits of his diocese, unless she could be led to do it in a different way and on different principles. He had invited her, or rather had approved of her coming, as an executor of charities, and not as a teacher of dogmatics. And in her new vocation, although she justly thought that God had assigned her a new and higher mission, which she herself had not anticipated, he deemed it the part both of safety and of duty, to interpose his ecclesiastical authority.

10. But in bringing about his object, he adopted a novel plan, more ingenious than it was wise. He proposed to her to give her property, or that portion of it which still remained within her control, to one of the permanent Religious Houses at Gex, and to become herself the prioress of it. Desirous of preventing her departure, if it could be done consistently with other views and other interests, he reasoned very naturally, that her position as prioress of a religious community, would give scope to her fertile and active powers of thought and piety, without furnishing opportunity to diffuse her exertions and influence beyond its limits, and thus good would be realized, without what he considered the existing dangers. The proposition does not appear to have been in all respects impracticable. She probably would have had no difficulty in disposing of that portion of her property which had not been settled on her children, and which still stood in her own name, for some religious purpose; — indeed, she repeatedly declared her readiness to do it; — but the inward voice, *the voice of God in the soul*, of which she so often speaks, and which, it seems to me, is the

true name for the decisions of a truly sanctified judgment, declared clearly and imperatively, that the objects of the new and higher mission, to which God had called her, could not be fulfilled by her taking such a course. She communicated, therefore, to the bishop, that she did not see the way open to accord with his plan; basing her refusal, as she expressly states, upon two propositions; FIRST, that she could not consistently and regularly become prioress, because she had not passed through the regular period prescribed to noviciates; and, SECOND, because by remaining permanently at Gex, she would incur the hazard and the sin of opposing and defeating the obvious designs of God upon her.

11. The good man had his heart too much set upon his design to receive this unfavorable decision with entire equanimity. In this position of affairs, Father La Combe left Thonon, on some business, which required him to visit the city of Anneci, the place of d'Aranthon's residence. He found the bishop somewhat dissatisfied and afflicted; and the following conversation, as Madame Guyon has reported it, took place between them.

D'Aranthon. You must absolutely engage this lady to give her property to the Religious House at Gex, and must get her consent to become the prioress of it.

La Combe. You know, sir, what Madame Guyon has told you of the dealings of God with her, and of what she has considered her religious vocation, both when you saw her at Paris, and also since she has been in this region. She has given herself up to do God's will. For this one thing, she has quitted all other things; and I do not believe that she will accept your propositions, if she has any fear that by so doing she will put it out of her power to accomplish the designs of God in regard to her. She has offered to stay with the sisters at the Religious House at Gex, as a boarder. If they are willing to keep her as such, she will remain with them; if not, she is resolved to retire, temporarily, into some convent, till God shall dispose of her otherwise.

D'Aranthon. I know all that; but I likewise know that she is so very obedient to you as her spiritual adviser and director, that, if you lay your commands upon her, she will assuredly comply with them.

La Combe. That is the very reason, sir, why I hesitate. Where great confidence is reposed, we should be very careful how we abuse it. I shall not compel Madame Guyon, on the ground of the confidence she has reposed in me, or of the spiritual authority which I possess over her, — coming as she does from a distant place, — after having made such sacrifices of her property as she has, to give up the whole of the remainder of it to a Religious House, which is not yet fully established, and which, if it ever should be, cannot be of any great use under the existing circumstances.

D'Aranthon. I do not accept your view of the subject. Your reasons, permit me to say, are without application and without value. If you do not make her do what I have said, I will suspend and degrade you.

La Combe. Be it so, sir. I cannot do what I believe to be wrong. I am ready, not only to suffer suspension, but even death itself, rather than do anything against my conscience.

Having said this, La Combe respectfully took his leave. The bishop was left to himself, conscious, undoubtedly, that he had verified, in one instance at least, the prevalent doctrine, — a doctrine almost as common then as it is now, — that the remains of the life of nature exist even in the best of men.

12. La Combe could not but perceive, that these things indicated anything rather than harmony and safety. Not knowing but some sudden measures might be taken, which would prejudice her security, he immediately sent to Madame Guyon some account of this interview, by express. But it was all well with her. She continued calmly in her work

at Gex; visiting the sick, relieving the poor, and instructing the ignorant, as God gave her opportunity; and especially inculcating upon all the necessity of a *heart wholly given to God.* And in doing this, she began to touch upon a subject, which is rather of a delicate nature in the church of which she was a member. She thought it necessary, with all possible discretion and kindness, to distinguish between the religion of forms and the religion of reality, between outward religion and inward religion, between genuflexions and signs of the cross made upon the exterior of the person, on the one hand, and prostrations and crucifixions of that which is interior, on the other. This seemed to her very important, although she admitted that forms and ceremonies were good, and to some extent necessary, in their place. In doing this, in which undoubtedly she had the guidance of a higher wisdom than man's wisdom, she took a course which was never forgotten nor forgiven.

13. But this was not all. She had learned the value of the Bible. When in the eleventh or twelfth year of her age she resided as a pupil in the Dominican convent at Montargis, she one day found a Bible in the room which was assigned her. By whose instrumentality it was thus providentially left there, she never knew. "I spent," she says, "whole days in reading it; giving no attention to other books or other subjects from morning to night. And having great powers of recollection, I committed to memory the historical parts entirely." From that time, the Bible was dear to her. Her constant references to the scriptures would be a decisive proof of this, even if we had not the additional and remarkable evidence, that she afterwards wrote and published, in the French language, twenty volumes of practical and spiritual commentary on the sacred writings. She felt it her duty, therefore, in opposition to the prevalent views among her own people at that time, to recommend

and to urge the reading of the Bible. She regarded this as essential. And this was another and great ground of offence.

15. Previous to the time of which we are now speaking, Bishop d'Aranthon, with a kindness creditable to him as a man and a Christian, had visited Madame Guyon, at Gex. She speaks of this visit in the following terms; "Soon after my arrival at Gex, Bishop d'Aranthon came to see us. I spoke to him of the religion of the heart. He was so clearly convinced, and so much affected, that he could not forbear expressing his feelings. He opened his heart to me on what God required from him. He confessed to me his own deviations and infidelity. Every time, when I spoke to him on these subjects during his visit at Gex, he entered into what I said, and acknowledged it to be the truth; as indeed it was the *Spirit of truth* who inspired me to speak to him, without whom I should be only a mere simpleton. But the effect of what I said was done away in a considerable degree by others. As soon as persons who sought for preeminence, and could not suffer any good but what came from themselves, spoke to him, he was so weak as to let himself be imposed upon with impressions against the truth. This foible, with others, has hindered him from doing all the good which otherwise he might have done in his diocese."

15. D'Aranthon, judging from the full accounts which have been given of him, seems to have been a good man; sincere, benevolent, laborious. He encouraged the coming of Madame Guyon into his diocese; and the statement which has just been given, shows that he received her with kindness and respect. When she conversed with him on the importance of possessing a heart truly redeemed and sanctified through the blood of Christ, uttering her remarks with an air of simplicity and of piety the truth of which could not be mistaken, and yet with remarkable grace and

eloquence, the good bishop could not but feel, that her conversation, woman though she was, made him a wiser and a better man. But. although he possessed many excellences, and wished to know what was true and to do what was right, he was wanting, as Madame Guyon intimates, in one valuable and even necessary trait in persons in responsible situations, that of *fixedness of purpose.* When he left her and propounded her views to others, with whom he was accustomed to advise on ecclesiastical subjects, he too readily yielded to the more recent influences.

16. There were those who were jealous of woman's influence; there were others, who loved sin more than they feared woman, and who would have felt no uneasiness at Madame Guyon's eloquence, if it had not been employed in denouncing their own baseness; and there were others, who very sincerely supposed that her doctrines were more nearly allied to the heresies of Protestantism, than to Catholic orthodoxy. These different persons, acting from different views and different motives, had an effect upon the mind of d'Aranthon. who gradually, but apparently with reluctance, assumed the attitude of opposition.

17. In this state of mind, he returned from Gex to Anneci. The course subsequently taken by La Combe, and especially his sermon on practical holiness, already mentioned, increased his fears, and tended to establish him in his position of distrust and unbelief. It naturally confirmed and strengthened him in this state, when he learned that the new doctrine, involving as it did the free and common use of the Bible, and the validity of ecclesiastical observances and ceremonies, was extending itself. In this state of mind, he made the propositions which have already been mentioned, namely, that she should give her property to a Religious House at Gex, and should herself become the prioress of it; thinking that her time would be so occupied with the duties of her position as

to prevent the efforts which she would otherwise make in the dissemination of her doctrines; and that if it were not so, her poverty, incurred by the alienation of her property, would render her dependent, and that they could thus extract compliance from her weakness, which they had no expectation of extorting from her moral principle.

18. But this singular course, which was dictated in part by a regard for Madame Guyon, and by a desire to detain her at Gex, entirely failed. For reasons which have already been stated, she could not do any thing of this kind. And from this time d'Aranthon, if he could not strictly be regarded as an enemy, ceased to be a friend. And thus she was left in a distant land, without any one on whom she could rely for adequate protection, exposed to various trials, which were calculated greatly to test her patience and faith. Her doctrine was denounced as heretical; her character was aspersed; and she was exposed to personal inconveniences and dangers, even at the hour of midnight, which were the result of a ferocity not more brutal than it was cowardly.

19. We have some notices of her inward experience at this time, which may perhaps be interesting to the reader. Referring to that state which we have already described as her state of deprivation or loss, she says; "In God I found with increase every thing which I had lost for him. In my long state of special trial and deprivation, my seven years' crucifixion, my intellect, as well as my heart, seemed to be broken. But when God gave back to me that love which I had supposed to be lost, although I had never ceased to love him, he restored the powers of perception and thought also. That intellect, which I once thought I had lost in a strange stupidity, was restored to me with inconceivable advantages. I was astonished at myself. I found there was nothing which it was not fit for, or in which it did not succeed. The understanding, as well as the heart, seemed to have received

an increased capacity from God; so much so, that others noticed it, and spoke of its greatly increased power. It seemed to me that I experienced something of the state which the apostles were in, after they had received the Holy Ghost. I knew, I comprehended, I was enabled to do, intellectually as well as physically, everything which was requisite. I had every sort of good thing and no want of any thing. I remembered that fine passage, which is found in the [apochryphal] book called the Wisdom of Solomon. Speaking of WISDOM, the writer, in the seventh chapter, says, '*I prayed, and understanding was given me; I called upon God, and the spirit of Wisdom came to me. I loved her above health and beauty, and chose to have her instead of light; for the light that cometh from her never goeth out. All good things together came to me with her, and innumerable riches in her hands.*' Wisdom came to me in Christ. When Jesus Christ, the Eternal Wisdom, is formed in the soul, after the death of the first Adam, it finds in him all good things communicated to it."

20. It is possible that the expressions which have just been quoted may be misunderstood. We are not to understand from them that God, in all cases, or even generally, accompanies the renovation and sanctification of the heart with a greatly increased expansion and power of the intellect. It is true, that religion is good for the intellect; it helps the intellect; clearing the mists of passion and removing the incumbrances of prejudice, and giving an increased degree of clearness and energy, both of perception and combination. We do not suppose that there is anything more than this in ordinary cases; and this, although it is what might naturally be expected, is a great blessing.

In the case of Madame Guyon, it should be remarked, that her powers were rapid and vast beyond ordinary examples; and having been prostrated so many years, they appeared at the time of her restoration the more rapid and more vast and wonderful by the contrast. Add to this that clearness and energy, which the renovation of the heart, by being formed into Christ's image, always gives, and I think we have an adequate explanation of the strong terms in which she expresses herself.

21. Speaking further of her experience during her residence at Gex, she says: "During this period I continued to be the subject, as it seemed to me, of purity, of love. I loved God, so far as I could perceive, with my whole heart; without any views of interest, without any division of the affections, without any reserve. Other terms will describe, however, not inappropriately, what seemed to be my state. I may describe it perhaps as a state of *perfect poverty*, because God had taken from me everything which I had once called my own, both inwardly and outwardly. Or I might call it, perhaps, the state of perfect *obedience to the will of God*, as I was not conscious of having any will but God's will. When by the loss of *ourselves*, we have passed into God, and have become in some sense divine by returning spiritually to that from which we came, then it is obvious that our will is made one and the same with the will of God, according to the prayer of the Saviour; — '*As Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us.*' The will in this position works easily, and works with power. It wills nothing which is not done, because it wills only what God wills."

22. "It was my practice," she says, "to arise at midnight, for purposes of devotion. I did not find it necessary to wind up my alarm-watch, in order to awake at the proper time. I saw that God had the care of a father and a spouse over me; and it seemed to me that he came to me at the precise time, and awoke me from sleep, that I might enjoy him. When I was out of health or greatly fatigued, he did not

awake me; but at such times I felt, even in my sleep, a singular possession of God. He loved me so much, that he seemed to pervade my being, at a time when I could be only imperfectly conscious of his presence. My sleep is sometimes broken, — a sort of half sleep; but my soul seems to be awake enough to know God, when it is hardly capable of knowing any thing else."

23. "The Lord," she adds, "made it known also to many persons, that he designed me for a mother of a numerous people, but a people simple and childlike. The persons to whom these intimations were given, coming, as they supposed from a divine source, took them in *a literal sense;* and accordingly thought that I should be called in providence to take the charge, in the capacity of superior or prioress, of some Religious House. But to me the matter appeared differently. I had reason to think, (and such was the interpretation which I gave to these intimations,) that God would make me an instrument, in his hands, of spiritual good to many persons. To these persons, in some instances at least, I supposed that God might give the same union of affection towards myself as that of children for a parent, and perhaps deeper and stronger."

The results seem to have justified this view. Many were the persons for whom, with God's blessing, she labored not in vain. Many were the persons who looked to her with affection and confidence, as their spiritual mother and guide.

24. "The soul," she remarks further, "passing out of itself by dying to itself, necessarily passes into its divine object. This is the law of its transition. When it passes out of self, which is limited and therefore is not God, and consequently is *evil*, it necessarily passes into the Unlimited and Universal, which is God, and therefore is the true Good. My own experience seemed to me to be a verification of this. My spirit, disenthralled from selfishness, became

united with and lost in God, its Sovereign, who attracted it more and more to himself. And this was so much the case, that I could seem to see and know God only, and not myself. My soul at first seemed to pass into him, and then to be lost in him; like the waters of a river, which pass into the ocean, and after a short time are so entirely united as to become one with it. It was thus that my soul was lost in God, who communicated to it his qualities, having drawn it out of all that it had of its own. Its life is an inconceivable innocence, not known or comprehended of those, who, still remaining in the life of nature, are shut up in themselves.

25. "The joy, which such a soul possesses in God, is so great, that it experiences the truth of those words of the royal prophet, — 'All they, who are in thee, O Lord, are like persons ravished with joy.' To such a soul the words of our Lord seem to be addressed: 'Your joy no man shall take from you.' It is, as it were, plunged into a river of peace. *Its prayer is continual.* Nothing can hinder it from praying to God, or from loving him. It amply verifies those words in the Canticles, 'I sleep but my heart waketh;' for it finds that even sleep does not hinder it from praying. Oh, unutterable happiness! Who could ever have thought that a soul, which seemed to be in the utmost misery, should ever find a happiness equal to this? Oh, happy poverty, happy loss, happy nothing, which gives no less than God himself in his own immensity, no more circumscribed to the limited manner of the creature, but always drawing it out of that, to plunge it wholly into his divine essence.

26. "Then the soul knows that all the states of self-pleasing visions, of intellectual illuminations, of ecstasies and raptures, of whatever value they might once have been, are now rather obstacles than advancements; and that they are not of service in this state of experience, which is far above them; because the state which has props or supports, which

is the case with the merely illuminated and ecstatic state, rests in them in some degree, and has pain to lose them. But the soul cannot arrive at the state of which I am now speaking, without the loss of all such supports or helps. In this are verified the words of an experienced saint: '*When I would*,' says he, '*possess nothing through selfishness, everything was given me without going after it*.' Oh, happy dying of the grain of wheat, which makes it produce an hundred fold! The soul is then so submissive, and perhaps we may say so passive, — that is to say, is so disposed equally to receive from the hand of God either good or evil, — as is truly astonishing. It receives both the one and the other without any selfish emotions, letting them flow and be lost as they came. They come, and do their office, and pass by, as if they did not touch us; because the soul takes nothing except what God brings, and with equal readiness and happiness leaves or loses it, when God sees fit to take it away. Its life is in God's life; and God's life is in his WILL, because his will is not only the development, but is the completion, the unity, and the full realization of himself."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Approaching trials. Consolations from Scripture. A dream. Some of the causes of the opposition which existed against her. She frustrates the wicked designs of an ecclesiastic upon an unprotected girl. The opposition and ill treatment which arose from this source. A party formed against her at Gex. In consequence of the persecutions of this party, she leaves Gex, after having resided there about eight months. Crosses the Genevan or Leman Lake to Thonon. A poem.

It was now fully evident, that trials, which would be likely to be very severe, awaited Madame Guyon. The sacrifices she had made and the benevolence of her mission, were no security against them. Such was the view which she herself took of the state of things. "I saw," she says, "that crosses in abundance were likely to fall to my lot. The sky gradually thickened; the storm gathered darkness on every side. But I found support and consolation in God and his Word. A passage in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews was particularly blessed to me. 'Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. *For consider him, who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*' Affected with a sense of my situation, I had no sooner read this consoling passage, than I prostrated myself, for a long time, with my face on the floor. I offered myself to God, to receive at his hand all the strokes which his providence might see fit to inflict. I said to him, Thou didst not spare thine own beloved son. It was thy holy one, thy loved one, that thou didst account worthy to suffer. And in such as most fully bear his image, thou dost still find those who are most fitted to bear the heaviest burden of the cross."

2. Even her dreams, which by a natural law of the mind's action repeat, although they sometimes greatly diversify, our waking perceptions and thoughts, seemed mysteriously to confirm her forebodings of sorrows to come; — sorrows, which would not be likely to be limited to herself, but threatened all who sympathized in her doctrines and in her holiness of life. "I saw," she says, "in a sacred and mysterious dream, (for such I may very well describe it,) Father La Combe fastened to an enormous cross, deprived of clothing, in the manner in which they paint our Saviour. I saw around him, while hanging and suffering in this manner, a frightful crowd; which had the effect to cover me with confusion, and threw back upon myself the ignominy of a punishment, which at first seemed designed for him alone. So that, although he appeared to suffer the most pain, it fell to my lot to bear the heaviest reproaches. I have since beheld the intimations of this dream fully accomplished."

3. Her doctrine was unpopular. The unpopularity of her doctrine rendered her personally less acceptable in some quarters than she had been. Her refusal to give up the remains of her property to the Religious House in Gex, and to defeat the obvious designs of providence, by becoming the prioress of it, was another source of trouble. The alienation of the feelings of Bishop d'Aranthon, which could not long be kept secret, had its influence. But still it was her faithfulness in proclaiming salvation by the cross of Christ,

and her fixedness of purpose in practically opposing wickedness wherever she found it, which arrayed against her the greatest number, and those the most virulent and uncompromising.

4. A single instance will illustrate and confirm this remark. There was an ecclesiastic residing at Gex, who was prominent alike by his position and his personal influence. This person, whose name is not given, endeavored, with purposes which could not have been right or honorable, to form an intimacy with a beautiful female resident at the Religious House, of which Madame Guyon was at this time a temporary inmate. Her greater knowledge of the world enabled Madame Guyon to see, much more distinctly than the unprotected and unsuspicious maid herself, the dangers to which she was exposed. Animated by sentiments of humanity, as well as of Christian charity, she not only warned the girl of the dangerous artifices which beset her, but endeavored to instruct her in the principles of religion, and to lead her to a knowledge of Jesus Christ. The girl was distinguished for powers of mind, as well as for beauty of person; and gave her most vigorous thoughts to the great subject, which was thus presented to her.

" God so blessed my efforts," says Madame Guyon, " that this interesting maid, under the guidance of the great inward Teacher, became truly religious; giving herself to God apparently with her whole heart." One of the results of this was, as might naturally be expected, that she became reserved and guarded towards the ecclesiastic who has been mentioned. This man, who was not ignorant that he was thus frustrated in his plans by the new spirit of piety which had arisen at Gex, became from this time the bitter enemy of Madame Guyon, and of all who sympathized with her.

5. This ecclesiastic formed a little party and put himself at the head of it, the sole object of which was, whatever

might have been the motives of some of those who were concerned in it, to render Madame Guyon's situation as uncomfortable as possible, and ultimately to drive her from Gex. Beginning, after the manner of those with whom the end sanctifies the means, with secret insinuations unfavorable to her character, he pursued his object in various ways, with a perseverance worthy of a better cause. "This ecclesiastic," she says, "began to talk privately of me in a manner calculated to bring me into contempt. I was not ignorant of what he was doing; but having, by divine grace, learned the great lesson of pitying and forgiving my enemies, I let everything pass unnoticed and in silence.

"It was at this time that there came a certain friar to see the person of whom I am speaking. The friar, who knew that Father La Combe approved of my views and practices, and who mortally hated that Father, on account of his greater regularity and religious principle, combined his efforts with that of the other, for the purpose of driving me from the Religious House in which I resided, and thus leave them to manage there in their own way, without any opposing influences. All the means which they could devise, they practised for that purpose. They succeeded, after a time, in gaining over to their party one of the sisters of the House, who acted in the capacity of house-steward; and soon afterwards they gained the Prioress."

6. As a part of the plan which had been adopted, her situation was rendered as uncomfortable and unpleasant as possible. It is painful to add, that the house-steward and the prioress, who had been the eye-witnesses of her benevolence and piety, were participants in this course. "I was disposed," she says, "to do all the good I could, physically as well as mentally; but being of a delicate frame, I had but little strength. I had employed two maid-servants to aid me and my daughter, but finding that the Religious

House or Community, in which I resided, had need of them, the one for a cook, and the other to attend the door and for other purposes, I consented that they should have their services. In doing this, I naturally supposed that they would occasionally allow me their aid, especially as I had given them all the funds which I then had in possession, and had thus put it out of my power to employ other persons. But under the new influences and designs which had sprung up, I was not allowed to realize this reasonable expectation. I was compelled to do my sweeping and washing and other domestic offices, which I had a right to expect, in part, at least, from them, and which my physical habits and strength, rendered, if not unsuitable, at least inconvenient and painful."

7. Another part of the system of vexation to which she was subjected, consisted in attacks upon her room at night. By some sort of contrivance, which of course was known only to those who were in the secret, frightful images were made to appear in her room or at the windows. Frightful sounds were uttered. The sashes of the room were broken. But though she was thus subjected to inconvenience and disturbance, she says that the calm peace of her soul was wholly unbroken.

Among other things, the ecclesiastic who was at the head of these movements, caused all the letters which were sent to her from friends abroad, and also the letters which she sent to them, to be intercepted. He had at one time twenty-two intercepted letters lying on his table. His object was, she says, "to have it in his power to make what impressions he pleased, no matter how unfavorable, on the minds of others, and to do it in such a manner that I should neither be able to know it, nor to defend myself, nor to send my friends any account of the manner in which I was treated."

8. She had ties which bound her to Gex. She had made impressions which could not easily be obliterated. The good girl whom she rescued from the artifices of the ecclesiastic, she says, "grew more and more fervent, by the practice of prayer, in the dedication of herself to the Lord, and more and more tender in her sympathy with me." And this was only one instance among many. But still she thought the providences of God indicated, that the time had come when she should leave the place. And whenever she decided in God's light, what she ought to do, she of course realized her decision in action, at the earliest practicable moment. It seemed to her, after a deliberate and prayerful consideration of the subject, that, at the town of Thonon, on the other side of the Leman Lake, where she could more easily receive advice and assistance from La Combe, she might suffer less, and at the same time be the means of doing more good. And accordingly we find her, in a few days more, embarked again in a little boat, with her two maid-servants and her young daughter, upon the water. From a comparison of dates, and from the light incidentally but obscurely offered by the circumstances of her history, I suppose it was early in the spring of 1682. If this be a correct view, she had resided at the place from which she was now departing, something more than half a year. This was the second time she had crossed the Leman Lake. There were no storms that day. If there were no storms without, neither was there storm nor trouble within. The calm lake, decorated in its vernal beauty, was nature's happy image of her own pure and peaceful mind. Without complaint, believing that God was glorified in what she had done and in what she had suffered, she went forth once more, a pilgrim and a stranger, to seek other associates, to meet other trials, and to sow the seed of God in other places.

9. The following poem, breathing the same devout spirit which characterizes the others that have been quoted, describes her feelings at this time.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPES AND CONSOLATIONS, CONTRASTED WITH THE WORLD'S UNBELIEF AND RUIN.

"My heart is easy, and my burden light;
I smile, though sad, when God is in my sight.
The more my woes in secret I deplore,
I taste thy goodness, and I love Thee more.

There, while a solemn stillness reigns around,
Faith, love and hope, within my soul abound
And while the world suppose me lost in care,
The joys of angels unperceived I share.

Thy creatures wrong Thee, O Thou Sovereign Good!
Thou art not loved, because not understood;
This grieves me most, that vain pursuits beguile
Ungrateful men, regardless of thy smile.

Frail beauty and false honor are adored;
While Thee they scorn and trifle with thy word;
Pass, unconcerned, a Saviour's sorrows by,
And hunt their ruin with a zeal to die."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Arrives at Thonon in the spring of 1682. *Interview with Father La Combe. He leaves Thonon for Aost and Rome. Her remarks to him at the time of his departure. Her confidence that God would justify her from the aspersions cast upon her. Cases of religious inquiry. Endeavors to teach those who came to her, in the way of faith. Some characteristics of a soul that lives by faith. References to her daughter. Visited at Thonon by Bishop d'Aranthon. Renewal of the proposition, that she should become Prioress at Gex. Final decision against it. Her position in the Catholic church. References to persons who have attempted a reform in the Catholic church, while remaining members of it. Attacks upon the character of La Combe in his absence. General attention to religion at Thonon. Her manner of treating inquirers. Her views of sanctification. The pious laundress. Opposition made by priests and others. Burning of books. Remarks.*

IN the spring of 1682, in the month of April, as I suppose, she reached the town of Thonon, and took up her residence there. Thonon is a considerable place, sixteen miles northeast of the city of Geneva, situated on the eastern side of the Leman or Genevan lake, near the mouth of the river Drance. It is the capital of Chablais, one of the provinces of the Duchy of Savoy. Having reached this place she became resident, as a boarder, in the Ursuline Convent, with her little family, consisting of her daughter and her two maids.

2. The day after her arrival, Father La Combe left Thonon, which was the usual place of his residence, for the

city of Aost, some sixty or seventy miles distant. Learning the arrival of Madame Guyon, which seems to have been unexpected to him, he visited her before he left. He expressed his sympathy in the trials she was called to endure; and said that he was sorry to leave her in a strange country, persecuted as she was by every one, without any persons to advise and aid her. And the more so, as it was his intention to proceed from Aost, where he was called on business of a religious nature, to the city of Rome. And it was possible, that he might be detained at Rome by those who had authority over him, for some time.

3. Undoubtedly this was a disappointment to Madame Guyon, (that is to say, it was a disappointment in the sense of its being different from what she had anticipated,) but she was inwardly prepared for it. She did not wish anything, which came to her in God's providence, to be otherwise than it was. She says, I replied to him, "My Father, your departure gives me no pain. When God aids me through his creatures, I am thankful for it. But I value their instrumentality and aid, only as they are subordinate to God's glory, and come in God's order. When God sees fit to withdraw the consolations and aids of his people, I am satisfied to do without them. And much as I should value your presence in this season of trial, I am very well content never to see you again, if such is God's will." Well satisfied to find her in such a frame of mind, he took his leave and departed.

4. It may be proper to say here, (as we might without impropriety have made the remark elsewhere,) that it was not the practice of Madame Guyon, either now or at a subsequent period, *to be in haste to justify herself.* This course, so different from that which is commonly pursued, which might perhaps appear a questionable one to some persons, she adopted on religious principle. At Gex her doctrines

had been attacked; her peace had been assailed by personal rudenesses and violence; and what must have been deeply afflicting to a woman constituted as she was, secret insinuations, unfavorable to her moral character, were circulated with unjust and unfeeling industry. But she left all with God. She believed that innocence and truth will always find, in God's time and way, a protector. Never will he fail to speak for those, never will he fail to act for those, who can be described as the innocent and the upright, if they will only put their trust in him in this thing as in others. I think we may lay it down as an important religious truth, that we are not at liberty to move in our own defence, any more than we are at liberty to move in anything else, without God to guide us. The truly holy heart will always say, let God's will be accomplished *upon* me, as well as accomplished *for* me. If it be God's will, that I should suffer rebuke, misrepresentation, and calumny, let me not desire the removal of the yoke of suffering which his hand has imposed upon me, until he himself shall desire it. I had rather suffer from his hand, than be without suffering through any other instrumentality than his. This seems to have been the Saviour's state of mind. This was hers. *She left her vindication with God; and she found him faithful.*

5. It seems to have been her intention to spend a few weeks after her arrival at Thonon in retirement. Needing rest, both physically and mentally, she felt it was proper for her to do so. Accordingly she had a small room, appropriated to her own private use, where, with her Bible before her, she passed many hours in acquiring spiritual knowledge and in divine communion. But there was this thing remarkable in relation to her. Wherever she went, after the time of that deeper experience which we have mentioned, the Holy Ghost seemed to attend her. The divine nature, something at least which had more of heaven than earth in

it, breathed in her voice, embodied itself in her manners, and shone in the devout serenity of her countenance. So that it was not necessary for her to set up formally as a preacher; and it is very obvious that she had no inclination to do so. Her life and presence, bearing as it did a divine signature, constituted a divine announcement. Her sermon was her life; and her eloquent lips only made the application of it.

And the consequence was, that wherever she went, she found those whom she calls her *children;* that is to say, persons under convictions of sin, and seeking her advice and aid in the way of life. They came to her continually that she might break to them the living bread.

6. "My inward resignation and quiet," she says, speaking of the state of things after her arrival at Thonon, "was very great. For a few days I remained alone and undisturbed, in my small and solitary room. I had full leisure to commune with God and to enjoy him. But after a short time, a good sister, who desired conversation on religious subjects, frequently interrupted me. I entered into conversation and answered everything she desired, not only from a regard and love for the girl herself, but from a fixed principle I had of strictly conforming to whatever God's providence seemed to require of me. And I would remark here, that, although this season of solitary communion with God was very precious to me, I was obliged to interrupt it, whenever His providence required. As soon as any of those, who sought salvation through Christ, *my little children*, if I may call them such, came and knocked at my door, God required me to admit the interruption. In this way he showed me, that it is not actions, *in themselves considered*, which please him, but the inward spirit with which they are done; and especially the constant ready obedience to every discovery of his will, even in the minutest things, and with such a sup-

pleness or flexibility of mind as not to adhere to anything, but to turn and move in any and every direction where he shall call. This disposition of mind, so exceedingly valuable, God was pleased to give me. My soul seemed to me to be like a leaf or a feather, which the wind moves in any way that it pleases. It is such a soul, a soul entirely dependent on his will, which God guides into the truth.

7. "I endeavored to instruct the good sisters, who came to me from time to time, in the best way I could. Some of them could perhaps be regarded as truly religious; but after an imperfect manner. It was my object to instruct them in the way of living by simple faith, in distinction from the way of living *ceremonially;* and thus to lead them to rest upon God alone through Christ. I remarked to them, that the way of living by faith was much more glorious to God, and much more advantageous to the soul, than any other method of living; and that they must not only cease to rely much upon outward ceremonies; but must not rely too much upon sights and sounds, in whatever way they might come to the soul; nor upon mere intellectual illuminations and gifts, nor upon strong temporary emotions and impulses, which cause the soul to rest upon something out of God and to live to self. There is a mixed way of living, partly by faith, and partly by works; and also the simple and true way of living, namely, by faith alone, which is the true parent, not only of other states of the mind, but of works also. I illustrated the subject by a dream, which I once had, in which the Lord showed me the two ways in which souls are apt to direct their course, under the *figure of two drops of water.* The one appeared to me of an unparalleled beauty, brightness, and purity. The other also had a degree of brightness, but it had in it also some little moats and dark streaks. Both are good to quench the thirst, but the former does it much more effectually, and is

much more pleasant. By the dark or impure drop is represented the mixed method of living; by the bright one is represented the way of pure and naked faith, or of faith alone, which pleases God much, because it is so pure, and so clear from all selfishness. That was, at first, a hard doctrine to those who heard me. They have since told me, that it pained them much."

8. Some other of her sayings, relating to the same subject and found in the same connection, are as follows. I give them as I have given others, in the spirit rather than the letter. "A soul, that lives by faith, is necessarily a soul truly consecrated. Such a soul seeks nothing for itself. It seeks all for God. Like a wheel within a wheel, it moves in the midst of God's providences, leaving itself to be conducted by them. Harmonizing with God and with God's direction of events, the result is, that, outwardly, its life seems quite common. It is a simple life, a true life, a just life; always in the right place, though that place be one of great trial and suffering; but without noise, without violence, without passion. Hence, outwardly, it is common, and is not calculated to attract much notice; but inwardly it is a life in union with the divine will. Such was the life of Jesus Christ, who was but little known until his last years. Such a soul is calm and happy amid the pains of the senses, the annoyances of the creatures, and all sorts of adversities. Its human manner of acting has passed away. The undue eagerness, the unholy violence of passion, the unguarded word, the impurity which comes from self-seeking, all are gone. It leaves itself to the operation of God upon it, in the simple and humble way of acquiescent and coöperative union. After a time its new life becomes entirely natural to it. And then the soul can say, with the royal prophet '*Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should arise against me, in this will I*

be confident.' * For then, though assaulted on every side by the attacks of evil spirits, the soul continues fixed as a rock. Having no will but for what God sees fit to order, be it what it may, high or low, great or small, sweet or bitter, honor, life, wealth, or any other object, what can shake its peace?

9. "There are not many souls that reach this state; and still fewer that reach it at once. Nature cries out against the process of inward crucifixion, and the greater number stop short. Oh, if souls had courage enough to resign themselves to the work of purification, without having any weak or foolish pity on themselves, what a noble, rapid, and happy progress would they make! But generally speaking, men have too little faith, too little courage, to leave the shore, which is something tangible and solid and has the support of sense, and to go out upon the sea which has the supports of faith only. They advance, perhaps, some little distance; but when the wind blows and the cloud lowers, and the sea is tossed to and fro, then they are dejected, they cast anchor, and often wholly desist from the prosecution of the voyage.

10. "Oh Thou, who alone dost conduct holy souls, and who canst teach ways so hidden and so lost to human sight, ways so contrary to the usual mixed and imperfect ways of devotion, — which has its virtues but which poisons itself by feeding upon its virtues instead of feeding upon God by union with God's will, — bring to thyself souls innumerable, which may love thee in the utmost purity. Every other love, however vehement and ardent, is not the pure love, but a love mixed with selfishness. Such holy souls are the delight of God, '*who delights to be with the children of men;*' that is to say, with souls childlike and innocent, such as are set free from pride, ascribing to themselves, — in themselves considered and separate from God, — only nothingness and sin.

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* Ps. xxvii. 3.

"Such souls, which are no longer rebellious but *are broken to the yoke, are one with God,* and are one with him to such a degree, that they not only look at him *only*, but they look at everything else *in him.* Beautifully expressive of a spirit quiet and united with God, is that passage of Jeremiah, where it is said, '*He sitteth alone and keepeth silence because he hath borne God's yoke upon him.*'*

11. "Such a soul not only rests with God, but *acts* with God; going where he goes, and doing as God would have it do. A soul in the mixed state has a *choice;* at least it has so at times; and just so far as it follows its own choice, which it does at times, it is not in the *straight way.* It mistakes in its opinions also; it has too high an idea of some, and too low an idea of others. And guided by these false opinions, it makes practical distinctions for *itself;* that is to say, it makes them for the reason that it is not *dead to itself,* but loves its own reputation; and accordingly it has not grace enough to sit down easily and thankfully with the "publican and sinner," and to labor with a single heart for the poor, the ignorant, the corrupt, the degraded. It is true that it does this sometimes; but it is a course which is deeply repugnant to the remains of its natural life.

"But a soul truly mortified and resigned, a soul truly holy, has no choice. It neither seeks the high nor the low, the learned nor the ignorant *of itself.* God's order, and that alone, constitutes the basis of its selection. It would rather converse, after the manner of Christ, with the most degraded and worst of men by the order of Providence, than with the best of men by its *own will;* desiring to see any one or to speak to any one, only as Providence directs. It knows well, that whatever it does out of the divine order, will only do hurt, or at least will prove very unfruitful.

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* Lamentations iii. 28.

12. "How perfectly contented is such a soul! Neither knowing anything nor doing anything, neither desiring to know anything nor desiring to do anything, except the thing to which God calls it. Its contentment, independent as it is of exterior events, excludes all anxiety, and is without limitation. Such a soul is more satisfied in its trials, its humiliation, and the opposition of all creatures, when these things take place by the order of Providence, than it would be with the highest success and triumph by its own choice. Oh, if I could express what I conceive of this state! But I can only stammer about it."

13. In this part of her Autobiography we find, from time to time, some brief references to her daughter. Separated as she was at a great distance from her other children, this child was a source of great consolation to her. Finding her situation at Gex not favorable to her child's health, she had previously sent her for a short time to Thonon. Her feeling allusions to this beloved daughter show, that her union with God did not diminish her interest in humanity; and that the natural affections, when properly subordinated, are not inconsistent with the highest religious affections. "In great peace of mind," she says, "I lived in the House of the Ursulines with my little daughter. As we now resided among those who spoke a different dialect, my daughter soon forgot, in a considerable degree, the use of the French language. She played with the little girls that came down from the neighboring mountains; but while she contracted something of their elasticity and freeness, she lost something in the delicacy and agreeableness of her manners. She was sometimes fretful; but as a general thing her disposition, as it ever had been, was exceedingly good. Her good sense and her turns of wit, for one of her age, were surprising. God watched over her."

14. Madame Guyon had been at Thonon but a short time, when Bishop d'Aranthon came there on some business. They met each other once more, and had much conversation. The Bishop introduced the subject of his former propositions, and pressed her very much to return to Gex, and to take the place of Prioress. She says, "I gave him my reasons against it, such as have already been mentioned. I then appealed to him as a bishop, desiring him to take care, and to regard nothing but God in what he should say to me. He was struck with a kind of confusion, and then said to me, 'Since you speak to me in this manner, I cannot advise you to it. We are not at liberty to go contrary to what appears to be our religious calling. All I can say now, after what has passed between us, is, that I desire you to render to the House of Gex all the assistance which you properly can.' This I promised him to do; and as soon as I received a remittance from Paris, I sent them a hundred pistoles, with the design of doing it annually as long as I should remain in his diocese."

15. When he left her, he entered into conversation with other persons on the subject, who were probably less scrupulous and less sincere than himself. With a singular infirmity of purpose, which was characteristic of him, and to which we have already alluded, he yielded to their influence, re-entered into his former dispositions, and adopted sentiments the opposite of what he had just expressed. He accordingly sent her word again, notwithstanding the result of their recent interview, that it was his conviction, that she ought to engage herself at Gex; and that, so far as his influence or authority could properly be exercised in the case, he required her to do it. "I returned for answer," she says, "that I had reason to regard him at the present time as under human influence, and as speaking *as a man;* and

that I felt it my duty to follow the counsel he had given me, when he seemed to me to be under a purer and higher influence, and to speak *as from God.*"

16. The separation now became more marked and complete. And from this time onward, Madame Guyon understood, more distinctly and fully than at any former period, the position which she held in the Catholic church. She was *in* the church, but not *with* it; in it in *form*, but not with it in *spirit.* Her associations with it were strong; her attachment to it was great; but discerning very clearly as she did the distinction between inward religion and outward religion, between that which adheres to the ceremony and that which renovates the heart, she mourned over the declensions and desolations around her. She felt, however, that while she pointed out the speculative and practical errors which existed, provided she did it with a proper spirit and sustained herself by Catholic authorities, she had a right to claim and maintain her position in the Catholic church, until she should be formally excluded from it. She was very much in the position of certain pious persons, who, without ceasing to be members, have labored from time to time in that church, with the design of restoring the doctrine of faith and the spirit of practical piety; and who are known historically, in reference to the period at which most of them appeared, as the *Reformers before the Reformation.*

17. It is due to the truth to say, that there have been in the Catholic church, from time to time, pious men and women, who have labored sincerely and oftentimes effectually, for the true life of love and faith in the soul. If they have loved their system much, and have felt sad at the idea of schism, they have loved salvation and piety more. Sometimes their labors have been received and recognized; and they have been spoken of as the models of piety, without the imputation of heresy; but more frequently their motives

have been impeached; their efforts have been opposed; and in some instances exile and imprisonment have been the consequence. Some appeared before the Protestant Reformation; and some have appeared since. To those who are acquainted with ecclesiastical history, it will indicate the class of persons to whom we refer, if we mention the Dominican monk, John of Vincenza, who labored as far back as 1250; Thauler, the celebrated preacher of Strasburgh, who is mentioned with high respect and commendation by Luther; Gerard Groot, and Florentius Radewin, leaders and teachers in the society or sect in the Catholic church, called the Brethren of the Life in Common; John of the Cross, whose writings, although not schismatical in reference to the doctrines and forms of Catholicism, breathe a deeply devout and enlightened spirit. To these we might add the names of Ruysbroke, Canfield, Thomas à Kempis, whose Imitation of Christ is so universally read, Boudon, John de Castanifa, the reputed author of the Spiritual Combat, Michael de Molinos, who died in prison, (while Francis de Sales, who seems to me to have taught essentially the same experimental doctrines, was canonized,) Fenelon, and I know not how many others.

18. The position of many of these persons in the Catholic church seems to me to illustrate that of Madame Guyon. Of their piety it is hardly necessary to say, that there can be no reasonable doubt. They were persons of faith and true simplicity of heart, who wished, although they found themselves amid various embarrassments, to do all possible good, in the situation in which Providence had placed them. They did not and could not believe, that an outward form, however scriptural and however important it might be, could effectually avail themselves or others, when separate from an appropriate state of heart. They distinctly saw the dangers which were likely to follow from an indifference to

this view, and especially from an adoption of the opposite opinion.

It was not sufficient, in their view, to teach men to make the sign of the cross, and to practise genuflections, nor to do other things which in themselves considered are purely ceremonial, although they recognized these practices as a part of a system to which they were much attached in most respects. They preached the doctrine of a new heart; they required, in the name of Him for whom they boldly spoke, "repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." And such being their views, and such their practice, if they cannot be regarded as schismatics or separatists, I think they may justly be described as *reformers*. Such was the position of Madame Guyon. To this position God called her in his providence; a position of great usefulness, but one which could not well escape a large share of trial and sorrow.

19. La Combe had no sooner departed for Aost, with the expectation of visiting Rome, and consequently of being absent some time, than the party at Thonon, which was opposed to what they regarded as a new movement in the church, began to assail his character. Madame Guyon had her feelings greatly tried by the extravagant stories, having relation to his character and conduct, which were told to her. But these statements were so obviously dictated by prejudice and passion, and were so variant in many particulars from what she knew to be the truth, that they confirmed rather than diminished her favorable opinions of him. She did not, however, say much upon the subject; simply remarking, — "Perhaps I may never see him again; but I shall ever be glad to do him justice. It is not he, who hinders me from engaging at Gex, as some of the remarks which are made seem to imply. The reason and the only reason of my refusing to comply with the propositions which have been

made to me, is the inward conviction, of which I cannot divest myself, that God does not call me to it."

20. Some said to her; — "But it is the opinion of the Bishop, that you should go there. Ought he not to judge in the case? Who could know what the will of God is, on such a question, better than the Bishop?" To this suggestion it was not in her nature or her principles, to give any other than a respectful attention. But such was the clearness of her spiritual perception, such the inward signature which God and his providences had written upon her heart, that she could not do otherwise than she did; although it undoubtedly violated some of the prepossessions of her people in favor of episcopal advice and authority. She intimates in this connection, that suggestions of this kind, though sometimes painful, gave her no permanent uneasiness. As she had given up all to God, in an act of permanent and unreserved consecration, she believed that God, in accordance with his promise, would give her all that wisdom, which was necessary to guide her in the right and safe way.

This was one of her principles, which seems to me to be practically a very important one, that God will guide us into truth, if in the first place by consecrating ourselves unreservedly to him we are free from the biasses of self-interest, and secondly if, in connection with this unreserved desire to do his will, we have full faith in him, that he will give us all the wisdom we need when we truly desire it. Under such circumstances, we cannot fail, in the exercise of the powers God has given us, to reach a decision, which will be right and safe so far as this, at least, — which is the great and important point, — that it will secure the divine approbation. She felt, therefore, that, in deciding as she did, God was with her; and that she could not decide otherwise than she did, without having God against her. And accordingly, with the influence of her understanding and her early sympathies in favor of a high degree of ecclesiastical authority, she nevertheless, in the matter which had been under consideration, placed the will of God first and preëminent above all other will, all other choice.

21. This matter, therefore, was permanently decided; and she gave her attention anew and undividedly to the work before her. Neither the absence of La Combe, nor the disaffection of the Bishop, nor the open opposition of subordinate ecclesiastics, nor the fact that she was a woman, acting under the natural and providential disabilities of woman's character and position, prevented her from being an instrument in God's hands of enlightening many souls, and of leading them experimentally to the knowledge of the truth. In the spirit of unremitting labor where God called her to labor, she did what she could; and the good seed, small though it might seem to be to human eye, became an hundred-fold, because God blessed it. Her presence, preceded as it had been by her reputation for piety and for a knowledge of the inward state, was the signal for a great spiritual movement in Thonon, such as had not been known before for many years. There was something in souls, who had sought heaven by works alone and on the compensatory principle of so much happiness given for so much labor and suffering antecedently gone through, which whispered to them, that God in his providence had sent them a messenger, who might aid them in the knowledge of a better way. The slightest hope of such an improvement was like light from above.

22. The consequence was, that her room was continually visited, in a few weeks after her arrival at Thonon, by persons seeking instruction in the way of life. She divided them into three classes; those without religion; those who gave evidence of religion but who had no faith for anything

above the mixed method of life, the way of mingled sin and holiness; and those who, under the special operation of God's spirit, were hungering and thirsting after entire righteousness. We do not suppose, that we shall be understood to say, that there was any *public* recognition or announcement of this classification; but simply, that in giving her advice and instructions to the individuals who came to her, she inwardly made it; and that her advice and instructions naturally conformed to it.

23. When those came to her who were without religion, and who perhaps had been endeavoring to extract heaven from the merit attached to their supposed good works, she endeavored to convince them of the folly of their course, by showing them the intricacies of the human heart, the depths of sin, and the impossibility of acceptance with God, except through the application of the atoning blood of Christ, received through faith.

When those came, who had some little hope of an interest in the Saviour, some degree and power of life though feeble, she gave them directions suited with great skill to their case, calculated to resolve conscientious perplexities, to strengthen courage, and to help their advancement. Entire victory was so much beyond their present ideas and hopes, that, to propose it now, in their present state of weakness and vacillancy, might have operated as a discouragement, and have done more hurt than good.

When those came, who desired to be wholly the Lord's, who, in the language of Scripture, were *hungering* and *thirsting* that they might bear the fullness of the divine image, she endeavored to impart to them those higher and deeper instructions, which they seemed to be able to understand and to bear.

24. She did not hesitate to say at once, on all occasions where God's providence called her to say it, that the entire

sanctification of the heart through faith, as it seemed to her, is the Christian's privilege and duty. But it is proper to say, however, that she laid "the axe to the root of the tree." She thought it necessary, in the first place, that they should understand what sanctification is. On this point, taught by her own inward experience, she felt it very desirable that there should be no mistake. She felt it her duty to say to them, that, according to her view of the subject, a rectified intellectual perception is not sanctification. Nor, if we add to such perception, strong emotions and *stop there*, do we attain to it. Nor, if we go still deeper, and add to both what is still more important, good desires, good and right affections, and *stop there*, can we account ourselves as wholly the Lord's. Holiness, which is but another name for sanctification, goes even further than this. It requires the strong fortress of the *Will.* The WILL, which embodies in itself both the head and the heart, the perceptions, the emotions, and the desires, and is in fact the sum and representation of the whole, must be given to the Lord. Without it all the rest goes for nothing.

And it was upon this point that she was in the habit of trying those, who professed to be seeking the entire sanctification of the heart. The searching question was; — were they willing to be NOTHING? That is to say, *nothing in themselves*, in order that the Lord might be ALL IN ALL. Was the natural principle of movement gone? Could they say, that they moved simply as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost? If so, then the life of nature was slain; their souls had become the temple of the Living God. God's will, the substitute for their own wills, had become to them a new life.

25. One of the cases which she relates illustrates, in some degree, what has now been said. Among other persons, who sought her acquaintance at this interesting time,

was a woman who was not only religious, but, according to the ordinary rules of judging, eminently religious. She had grace, perhaps we may say, great grace; but not to the exclusion of the life of nature. In connection with her interviews with this person, she says, "I saw clearly, that it is not great gifts which sanctify, unless they are accompanied *with a profound humility.* No one can be regarded as wholly alive to God, and thus as sanctified, or as a true *saint* of God, who is not *wholly dead to self.* This woman, in connection with her great intellectual lights, and her strong emotions, and the true faith which she really possessed to some degree, regarded herself as a truly *holy* person; but the developments of her subsequent life, originating as they obviously did in the remains of self, showed that she was very far from the state which she professed.

"Oh, my God," she adds, "how true it is, that we may have of thy gifts, and yet may be very full of ourselves! How very narrow is the way, how straight is the gate, which leads to the true life in God! How little must one become, by being stripped of all the various attachments which the world places about him, so that he shall have no desire and no will of his own, before he is small enough to go through this narrow place! But when, by death to ourselves, we have passed through it, what enlargements do we find! Our will by being lost and dead to itself, is raised and magnified into the divine will. David saith, '*He brought me forth into a large place.*' And what is this *large* place, what *can* it be, but God himself, that Infinite Being, in whom all other beings and all other streams of life terminate. *God is a large place indeed.* And it was through humiliation, through abasement, through nothingness David was brought into it."

26. Besides those persons who have already been mentioned as having visited her, it is proper to say, that there was another class who came with different views and mo-

tives. They not only watched her general conduct; but under religious pretences, they made their appearance at her religious conversations, which seem to have been open to all, with the object, as she expresses it, "of watching my words, and of criticising them." The religious life, like all other life, has its appropriate outward expressions and signs. And such was her deep insight into religious character, derived partly from her own varied personal experience, that she distinguished with great ease, and with high probability, the objects and the characters of those who visited her. To those who came for the purpose of extracting something from her expressions which they could criticise and condemn, or for any other sinister object, she had nothing to say. The Lord, who enabled her to understand their characters, disappointed their evil intentions by withholding the message, which under other circumstances she so abundantly received and communicated. "Even when I thought to try to speak to them," she says, "I felt that I could not, and that God would not have me do it. They went away not only disappointed but dissatisfied. They alluded scornfully to my silence, which they regarded as stupidity; and some of them were so angry as to characterize as fools those who had come to see me.

27. "On one occasion, when persons of this description had just left me, an individual came, with some appearance of anxiety and hurry, and said, 'It was my design to have put you on your guard, and to apprize you that it might not be advisable to speak to those persons; but I found myself unable to get hither in season to do it. They were sent, with no friendly purpose, by certain individuals; and their object was to find something in your remarks which they could turn to your disadvantage.' I answered this person, 'Our Lord has been before you in your charitable purpose; for,

such was my state of mind, that I was not able to say one word to them.'"

28. It is hardly necessary to say, that she did not appear as a *preacher*. Her efforts were private; and were entirely consistent with that sense of decorum, which adorns the female character. They consisted of private prayer and conversation with individuals; sometimes of mutual conversations or conferences, held with the inconsiderable number of persons who might be assembled in a small room. To these methods she added, with great effect, that of written correspondence. The instrumentality was humble; but the impression was great. The Lord blessed her: and for a time, soon after her arrival at Thonon, she had favor with the great body of persons there, who availed themselves of all suitable opportunities to see her and to hear her words.

29. Amid this general approbation and even applause, "the Lord," she says, "gave me to understand, that the 'apostolic state,' (that is to say, the state in which persons find themselves specifically and especially devoted to the spiritual good of others,) if it be entered into in purity of spirit and without reserve, will always be attended, in the present state of the world, with severe trials. I remembered the words of the multitude, which preceded the Saviour at the time of his triumphant entry into Jerusalem; '*Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;*' and the words of the same changeable multitude a few days afterwards, when they exclaimed, '*Away with him, crucify him, crucify him.*' Deeply were both forms of expression impressed upon my mind; and I could not fail to recognize in them the intimations of what would be likely to be my own experience. And while I was thus meditating on what the Saviour experienced, and from whom he experienced it, and was making the application of it to my own case, one of my female friends came in, and spoke to me particularly of the general

esteem which the people had for me. I replied to her, '*Observe what I now tell you, that you will hear curses out of the same mouths, which at present pronounce blessings.*'

30. "If our Saviour had continued in private with his parents," such is the import of some other remarks which she makes in this connection, "in the manner in which he spent the earlier part of his life, he probably would not have been persecuted, and certainly not to the extent in which he actually was. He would have been none the less holy, because he remained there in accordance with God's providence, and in fulfilment of the divine will. Holiness does not depend upon place, but upon union with the divine will, which prescribes both place and time, both rest and action; and which may assign to one, who in either situation is equally dear and acceptable to God, the quiet duties of retired and domestic life, or the more arduous and hazardous duties of a public nature. But if he would have been none the less holy, he probably would have been less subjected to affliction. When God called his Son from private to public action, he called him to a higher degree of trial and suffering. And so in later times, when he calls his people to the 'apostolic state,' when he imposes upon them the duty of announcing his truth, and in thus announcing it to expose error and to attack vice, he calls them to suffering as well as to duty. I speak of those, who are truly called of God to this state, and who in being thus called, surrender themselves to God without reserve; those, who are willing, in obedience to the divine command, to expose themselves to toil and to suffering without any mitigation. Such must assuredly become a spectacle to God, to angels, and to men; to God, a spectacle of *glory*, by their conformity to his Son Jesus Christ; to angels, a spectacle of *joy*, because they are become like themselves in bearing the divine image; and to men, a spectacle of toil, of sorrow,

and of ignominy, *because, being in the world, they are not of it.*"

31. She expressly informs us, that God at this time wrought on a great number of souls at Thonon, through her instrumentality. "Great was my consolation," she says, "never greater did I experience in my whole life, than I did to see in the town of Thonon, a place of no great extent, so many souls earnestly seeking God. Some of these seemed not merely to have repented of their sins, but to have given their whole hearts to God, and to have experienced the highest spiritual blessings. They were not only Christians, but Christians of whom it could be said, that *Christ lived in them.* Among them were a number of young girls of twelve or thirteen years of age. It was interesting to see how deeply the spirit of God had wrought in them. Being poor, they industriously followed their work all the day long; but having acquired a fixed habit of devotion, they sanctified their labors with silent prayer, and with inward communion. Sometimes they would so arrange their daily labor, that a number of them could carry on their work at the same place; and then they would select one of their number, who read to them while the others pursued their task. They were so humble, so innocent and sincere, that one could not see them without being reminded of the innocence and purity of primitive Christianity."

32. Among those who were the subjects of this great work, she mentions particularly a poor woman, a laundress. "This poor woman," she says, "was the mother of five children. But her poverty, and the cares of her family, were not the only source of trouble. She had a husband, who was distempered both in mind and in body. He had the paralysis in his right arm. He seemed to have nothing left mentally but his angry dispositions, and nothing left physically but just strength enough in his unparalyzed arm to

beat his suffering wife. Yet this poor woman, now become, under God's grace, rich in faith, bore all with the meekness and patience of an angel. By her personal labors she supported both her five children and her husband. Her poverty was extreme; her suffering from other causes great; but amid her trials and distractions, she kept constantly recollected in God; and her tranquillity of spirit was unbroken. When she prayed, there was something wonderful in it.

33. "Among others who were the subjects of the divine operation at this time, there was a shop-keeper, and another man whose business it was to make locks. Both became deeply religious; and it was a natural result, that they became intimate friends with each other. Learning the situation of the poor laundress, they agreed to visit her in turn, and to render her some assistance by reading to her from religious books. But they were surprised to learn, that she was already instructed by the Lord himself in all they read to her. God, they found, had taught her inwardly by the Holy Ghost, before he had sent, in his providence, the outward aid of books and of pious friends to confirm his inward communications. So much was this the case, that they were willing to receive instruction from her. Her words seemed divine."

34. This woman, whose piety had become the subject of conversation to some extent, attracted the notice of certain persons, who had some name and authority in the church. They visited her; and, as it was well understood that her method of worship was somewhat out of church order, they reproved her, and told her it was very bold in her to practise prayer in the manner she did. They said, it was the business of priests to pray, and not of women. They commanded her to leave off prayer, at least in the methods in which she practised it, and threatened her, if she did not. The woman was ignorant, except so far as she had learned

something from the Bible, and as God had inwardly taught her. God gave her words in reply. She said, that what she did was in conformity with Christ's instructions. She referred them to the passage of Scripture, in the thirteenth chapter of Mark, where Christ instructed his disciples to pray; noticing particularly the remark which is added, and which she regarded as a degree of authority applicable in her case, namely, "*what I say unto you I say unto all.*" This passage, she said, authorized all to pray, without specifying priests or friars, or giving them any privilege in this respect above others. She told them, moreover, that she was a poor and suffering woman, and that prayer helped her; and that, in truth, without the consolations of religion, of which prayer is the appropriate and natural expression, she could not support her trials.

35. She referred also to her former life. She had formerly been without religion, and was a wicked person. Since she had known religion, and had held communion with God in prayer, she had loved him, and she thought she could say, she loved him with her whole soul. To leave off prayer was to lose her spiritual life. Therefore she could not do it. She also directed their attention to other persons, who had recently come into a state similar to her own. Take twenty persons, she said, who are religious, and observe their life. Take twenty other persons who do not practise prayer and know nothing of the religion of the heart, and make the same observation. And judge then, whether you have any good reason for condemning this work of God.

36. "Such words as these," says Madame Guyon, "from such a woman, one would think, might have fully convinced them. But instead of that, they only served to irritate them the more." They threatened her with a withdrawal of the privileges of the church, of which she was a member,

unless she promised to desist from her course; that is to say, unless she promised (for that would be the result of it as matters then stood,) not only to renounce the reading of the Bible, and the practice of inward and outward prayer, but to renounce Christ himself. Her answer was, that she had no choice in the matter. The decision was already made. Christ was master, and she must follow him. They put their threats into execution to some extent. But she remained steadfast. These things go to confirm what has already been said, that Madame Guyon might properly be reckoned among those, who, without leaving the Catholic church, were Reformers in it.

37. The persons whom we have mentioned, who represented the dominant part of the Catholic church in Thonon, endeavored to influence other pious persons in a similar manner. But finding their efforts in a great measure ineffectual, they next took the course of ordering all the books without exception, which treated of the inward religious life, to be brought to them; and they burned them with their own hands in the public square of the place. "With this performance," says Madame Guyon, "they were greatly elated."

A part of a letter, found in the published life of Bishop d'Aranthon, throws some light upon the existing state of things. The writer says, "We have burnt five of the books on these subjects. We have not much expectation of getting possession of many others. And the reason is, that the men and women who read them, have their private meetings or assemblies with each other, and have resolved at these meetings that they will burn the books themselves, rather than let them fall into our hands."

38. It is proper to notice, that Madame Guyon gives us further to understand, that some of the persons who were engaged in these things, were apparently religious; but reli-

gious in the common *mixed way*, partly human and partly divine, partly from earth and partly from heaven. Consequently, so much of their actions as were not from God were from that which is the opposite of God, namely, Satan. At this time I suppose it may not be inconsistent with charity to say, that the good element, or God in them, seems to have been kept in abeyance; and that the evil element, or Satan in them, reigned. And this was particularly the case in their treatment of the pious girls, who have been mentioned. These girls, being poor and obliged to work continually, formed little neighborhood associations; prosecuting in this way their work together, and those who were strong helping the weak. The eldest one presided at these little meetings; and the one who was best qualified for that task was appointed reader. They employed themselves in spinning, weaving ribbons, and other feminine occupations. Prayer and religious love made all pleasant. Such assemblies are not uncommon among Protestants. But the prevalent religious party at Thonon considered them inconsistent with the Catholic methods. And, accordingly, being in the mixed life, which permits the human to mingle with and sometimes to control the divine, and Satan being at this time inwardly in the ascendant, they separated these poor but happy girls from each other, deprived them, as a punishment, of their usual church privileges, and drove some of them from the place.

39. It is painful to speak of these things. I do not suppose that aspersions, cruelties, persecutions, are limited altogether to Catholics. Some will say, that conduct of this kind is the natural result of that interest in religious institutions which is implied in true faith. This may, perhaps, be true in a certain sense. But add *more faith;* and then the evil will not be likely to result. A *little* faith makes us love the cause of religion; but it leaves us in *fear;* which would

not be the case if we had more faith. We tremble for the Ark of God, as if not God, but some son of Obededom, or other weak and human agent, were the keeper of it. Faith and fear are the opposites of each other, both mentally and theologically. When priests, whether Catholic or others, have opposed and persecuted those who differed from them in opinion or who undertook some reform, I would not in all cases, nor generally, attribute it to their self-interest, and to the fact, or the supposed fact, of "their craft being in danger." Self-interest, especially among those who have felt the influences of religion, is not the only principle of human action. Persecutions have been practised by those, who verily thought they were doing God service. And these good people of Thonon, (undoubtedly some of them were *good* people,) opposed and injured those who were God's people equally with themselves, and perhaps much more than themselves, like those disciples of Christ, who, in their premature zeal, were for calling down fire from heaven to destroy their adversaries, simply because they did not know *what manner of spirit they were of.*

40. They had confounded the church with the ceremonies of the church; and when Madame Guyon felt it her duty to indicate the difference between the substance and the shadow, between the spirit and the letter, touching the ceremonial it is true, but still with the gentleness of a woman's hand, then the good Catholics, to whom the ceremonial was undoubtedly very dear, were all in arms. Their consternation was real, not affected. They forgot that God is able to take care of the church without employing Satan's instrumentality. Hence their injustice; hence their cruelty; not because they had faith, but because they had not more faith; not because they loved the church, but because they had forgotten, in too great a degree, the mighty power and the pledged promise of the God of the church.

But that day has passed. They acted undoubtedly according to the light which they had; which was not a greater light, because "the light shone in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." *She* acted according to hers. *They* had their reward; *she* had hers. Of those who do evil, Christ, who is the true light, has said, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Of those who do good, but are persecuted for it, the same Christ has said, in language which gives courage to the fainting heart, *Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

CHAPTER XXV.

Conversion of a physician. Further instances of persecution. Some of those who had been opposers become subjects of the work of God. Some striking instances of the care of Providence in relation to her. Visit to Lausanne. Establishment of a Hospital at Thonon. Removal from the House of the Ursulines to a small cottage a few miles distant from the lake. Return of La Combe. Her opposers make their appeal to Bishop d'Aranthon. He requires Madame Guyon and La Combe to leave his diocese. Rude and fierce attacks made upon her in her solitary residence. Decides to leave Thonon. Her feelings at this time. La Combe. His letter to d'Aranthon. Remarks of Madame Guyon on some forms of religious experience. On living by the moment.

SHE mentions a number of incidents, some of them of considerable interest, which took place in connection with this revival of God's work. "One day," she remarks, "I was sick. A physician of some eminence in his profession, hearing that I was ill, called in to see me, and gave me medicines proper for my disorder. I embraced the opportunity of entering into conversation with him on the subject of religion. He acknowledged that he had known something of the power of religion, but that the religious life had been stifled in him by the multitude of his occupations. I endeavored to make him comprehend, that the love of God is not inconsistent with the duties of humanity; and that therefore the employments, which God in his providence assigns us, are no excuse for irreligion, or for any state of mind short of a strong and consistent piety. He received what I said. The conversation was greatly blessed to him. And he became afterwards a decided Christian."

2. She relates of those persons, who made the opposition to this divine work, of which we have given some account in the last chapter, that, among their other acts of cruelty, they seized upon a person of considerable distinction and merit, and beat him with rods in the open street. The crime which was charged against him, was, that, instead of confining himself to the common forms of prayer, he prayed extemporaneously in the evenings. The man was a priest, of the Congregation of the Oratory. It was alleged also, that he was in the practice of uttering a short, fervent prayer, in the same manner, on Sabbath days, which had the effect gradually and insensibly to lead others to the use and practice of the like.

Speaking of the persons who thus violently, and in a public manner, beat this good man, and of others who were in the like hostile dispositions and practices, she says, "they greatly troubled and afflicted all the good souls, who had sincerely dedicated themselves to God; disturbing them to a degree which it is difficult to conceive; burning all their books which treated of inward submission and of the prayer of the heart, in distinction from mere outward and formal prayer; refusing absolution to such as were in the practice of it, and driving them by their threats into consternation and almost into despair."

3. But this state of things, which had the appearance of crushing religion, gave occasion for a remarkable exhibition of God's power and grace. Even some of these men, those of them who were obviously without religion, led to reflect upon their own characters by the sad lesson of the violence which they themselves had exhibited, became, after a short time, humbled in heart. Through divine grace they not only

ceased from their evil works, but became experimentally and practically new creatures in Christ Jesus. "And then," she says, "the Lord made use of them to establish religion and the life of prayer in I know not how many places. They carried books, which treated of the inward life, into those very places where they had formerly burned them. In things of this nature it was not difficult for me, in the exercise of faith, to see the presence and the wonderful goodness and power of the Lord."

This was now the fixed law of her mind, "*God in every thing.*" In small things as well as in great, in natural as well as religious, she recognized his hand. Some little incidents of a private and domestic nature, which I think it will not be inconsistent with the objects of this work to mention, illustrate her trust in Him.

4. "God," she says, "took care of all my concerns. I saw his providence incessantly extended to the very smallest things. I will illustrate what I mean. I had sent to Paris for some papers, which it was very desirable that I should have in my possession. Months had passed, but the papers did not come. Looking at the matter in the human light, the disappointment and the loss were great. But I left it wholly with the Lord in great peace and confidence. Whether I received them or not, I could not separate the result from God's will; and that will was equally dear to me in either case. After I had taken what seemed to me suitable measures, some pressed me much to write again; but an invisible hand held me back. Something within me whispered, that it would be distrusting the Lord. After some months I received a letter from an Ecclesiastic at Paris, stating that the papers were in his possession, and that he would soon come to see me and bring them.

5. "At another time I had sent to Paris for a considerable number of articles, which were necessary for my daugh-

ter. They were sent, but did not arrive. The report was, that they had reached the borders of the Leman lake, were put on board a boat, and were lost. I could learn no further tidings about them. But I left it wholly with the Lord, in entire quietness of spirit. I could not separate the will of God from any thing which took place in his providence. Having done all that was suitable to be done in the case, if they were found, *it was well;* if they were lost, it was *equally well.* At the end of three months, they were brought to me, having been found in the house of a poor man, who had not opened them, and who did not know who brought them to his house.

6. "On another occasion I sent to Paris for an amount of money, which I had estimated would be enough to meet my expenses for a year. I received it in a bill of exchange on some person in the city of Geneva. A person was sent from Thonon to Geneva to receive the avails of the bill in specie. The money was deposited in two bags, and placed on the man's horse. The man rather carelessly, for some reason connected with his own convenience, gave the horse to be led by a boy a little distance. As the boy went along, directing his way through the market of Geneva, the money fell off without being noticed by him.

"At that very moment, I arrived myself, approaching the market place on the other side. Having alighted from the conveyance in which I came, I proceeded a few steps, and the first thing I noticed was my bag of money. There was a great multitude of people in the place; but the bag was not perceived by them; or if it was, it was left untouched. Many such things have attended me, which to avoid prolixity I pass by. These may suffice to show the continual protection of God towards me."

7. In the meanwhile the work of God continued. Sinners were conversed with; those who were religious prayed;

those who were without religion began to believe and were saved. When opportunity offered, Madame Guyon, whose efforts were unwearied, extended her labors into the neighboring villages. On one occasion, it is worthy of notice, that, for some object connected with her religious mission, she made an excursion by water to Lausanne; a place rendered celebrated, not only by much which is pleasing in its situation, but by having been the residence, for many years, of one of the most popular English historians. This pleasant town is situated on the borders of the Leman or Genevan lake, about fourteen miles distant from Thonon, and nearly opposite to it, on the other side of the lake. She went in one of the boats that plied between the two places.

"In our return," she says, "we experienced a severe tempest. We were in a dangerous place, when it came upon us, and narrowly escaped being swallowed in the waves. God was pleased to protect us. A few days afterwards a small vessel foundered nearly in the same place, with thirty-three persons in it."

8. It was about this time that Father La Combe, who had returned from Rome, formed the plan of establishing a Hospital at Thonon, for the benefit of poor people seized with maladies. As subordinate to the general plan, the ladies of Thonon formed a society, the object of which was, after the practice which prevailed in France, to aid poor families whose sick members were absent at the hospital, as well as to aid the sick themselves in the means of support there. There had been no institution of that kind before, in that part of the country. "Willingly," says Madame Guyon, "did I enter into this plan. With no other funds than what Providence might please to furnish, and some useless chambers, which the gentlemen of the town gave us, we began our effort. We dedicated the place to the holy child Jesus. God enabled me to furnish the first beds which were ob-

tained. He blessed the undertaking so much, that several other persons soon joined us in this benevolent effort. In a short time we were not only enabled to place in the building twelve beds, but were especially favored in finding three very pious persons, who gave themselves, without any salary, to the service of the hospital, dedicating themselves to the aid of poor patients.

"I assumed the office of furnishing it with the requisite medicines, which were freely given to such of the poor people of the town as had need of them. The good ladies who were associated in this undertaking, were so hearty in it, that through their care and charity the hospital was in every respect very well maintained and served. These ladies joined together also in providing for the sick who could not go to the hospital; and I gave them some little regulations, such as I had seen adopted in France, which they made the rules of their associations and which they continued to keep up with tenderness and love."

9. Madame Guyon arrived at Thonon in April, 1682, as near as can now be ascertained. She commenced her residence there as a boarder in the House of the Ursulines, where she remained a little more than two years. During the latter part of this period she experienced a severe sickness, of which she has given some account, which held her for some time. After her recovery she found herself so infirm, that she thought it necessary to change her residence, and to obtain one which, by being a little more remote from the water, would be more favorable to her. She left the Ursulines in the spring or summer of 1684. The house which she obtained at that time, was in a more healthy position, some miles distant from the lake. It was inconvenient, except in its position; but it was the only one in that neighborhood which was unoccupied, and which she could obtain.

"It had a look," she says, "of the greatest poverty. It had no chimney except in the kitchen, through which one was obliged to pass to go to the chamber. I took my daughter with me, and gave up the largest chamber to her, and to the maid who took care of her. The chamber which I reserved to myself, was a very small one; and I ascended to it by means of a ladder. Having no furniture of my own except some beds, which were quite plain and homely, I bought a few cheap chairs, and such articles of earthen and wooden ware as were necessary. I fancied every thing better on wood than on plate. Never did I enjoy a greater content, than in this hovel. It seemed to me entirely conformable to the littleness and simplicity, which characterize the true life in Christ."

10. The change of her residence did not diminish her influence. It could not well be diminished, while the conviction remained so prevalent as it did, that she was a woman taught of God. At Thonon her adversaries, who were in the wrong position of fighting against God, had been foiled at every point. And what seemed to render their case the more hopeless, Father La Combe, whose talents and piety gave him a prominent position, had returned after a long absence, from Rome, and had united his influence and efforts with those of Madame Guyon. He had returned too without being condemned for his alleged heresies, as it was supposed that he might be. At this juncture of affairs the adversaries of the religion of the heart, in distinction from that which is formal and ceremonial, and especially of that higher and sanctifying experience, which she generally denominated *pure love*, adopted a new, and as the result showed, a more effective mode of attack.

11. They made their complaints to Bishop d'Aranthon. They represented that the church, especially in her prescribed forms and ceremonies, was in danger. The fact that

La Combe had united his influence to that of Madame Guyon, had given to the new spiritualism a consequence which demanded attention. They represented to him, that, if in the exercise of his authority as bishop, he did not take some repressive measures, he could not be considered as doing his duty to the church; and it is but reasonable to suppose, under the circumstances of the case, that they intimated that such a position would not be respectful to the king of France, to whom he was under some obligations, and who had abundantly shown his zeal against heretics. Already the evils of novel opinions, or of actual schism, had been experienced in Spain. Already the SPIRITUAL GUIDE of Michael de Molinos had announced doctrines in Italy, which were justly considered as allied to those of Protestantism. How then was it possible, that, under the existing state of things, he should remain undecided or inactive?

12. Such considerations, brought to bear upon a mind that was easily influenced, aided by his sincere and strong attachment to the church *as it then was*, aroused d'Aranthon to decisive action. He not only required all priests and others under his authority to oppose the progress of the new views, but insisted, that both Madame Guyon and La Combe should leave his diocese.* Madame Guyon wrote to him a letter on the subject, but without effect.

13. Referring to some benevolent efforts she had made, she says, "All these things, which cost but little, and which owed all their success to the blessing that God gave them, drew upon me and my friends new persecutions. Every day my opposers invented some new slander. No kind of stratagem, or malicious device in their power, did they omit. They came to surprise and ensnare me in my words; but God guarded me so well, that they discovered, in so doing,

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* La Vie de Messire Jean D'Aranthon D, Alex, Liv. iii, ch. 4.

only their own malevolence. The dissatisfaction of Bishop d'Aranthon with me was obviously greater than ever, especially when he saw that my efforts, of a benevolent and religious nature, which undoubtedly he sincerely disapproved in some respects, rendered me beloved by others. He said peevishly, that 'I won over everybody to my party.' Another remark implied, that he could be patient with my doctrines if they were confined to myself, and were not spread abroad. And finally, he openly declared, that 'he would no longer submit to have me in his diocese,' although I was not conscious of having done anything in it but good, or rather God had done good by me. And what rendered my position the more trying, he extended his unkind treatment to my friends. The Prioress of the Ursulines, with whom I had resided a considerable part of my time at Thonon, received a large share of it."

14. When it is understood, that those who are in power and authority, have come to the conclusion, with whatever justice, or whatever want of justice, to crush those who are weaker, there are never wanting persons who are ready to aid in carrying the decision into effect; not only men from whom better things could be expected, but especially rude men, men of minds contracted and of hearts selfish, who resort to measures which enlightened and benevolent men could not approve. This sort of rude and ungenerous opposition was employed against Madame Guyon. She resided at this time in an obscure and poor cottage, at some distance from the more settled parts of the country, with her little daughter and one or two female domestics; but otherwise wholly unprotected. She says, "I was greatly contented in my small and rude residence. Hoping to remain there for some time, I had laid in such provisions as were necessary for me; but Satan, the great instigator of evil, did not long permit me to remain in such sweet peace.

"It would be difficult for me to enumerate all the acts of unkindness and cruelty, which were practised towards me. The little garden near my cottage I had put in order. Persons came at night and tore it all up, broke down the arbor, and overturned everything in it; so that it appeared as if it had been ravaged by a body of soldiers. My windows were broken. They were dashed through with stones, which fell at my own feet. All the night long persons were around the house, making a great noise, threatening to break it in, and uttering personal abuse. I have learned since who put these persons upon their wicked work.

15. "It was at this time that notice reached me, *that I must go out of the diocese.* The good which God had enabled me to do, was condemned more than the greatest crimes. Crimes were tolerated; but the work of God, resulting in the conversion and sanctification of souls, could not be endured. All this while I had no uneasiness of mind. My soul found rest in God; I never repented that I had left all to do what seemed to me to be his will. I believed that God had a design in everything which took place; and I left all in his hands, both the sorrow and the joy."

16. Under these circumstances, it is obvious that she could no longer remain. "I saw," she says, "that there was nothing for me to do here, so long as the bishop should be against me. I did what I could to gain his good will; but it was impossible to do it on any other terms than the engagement which he demanded of me, and which I knew it to be my duty not to make." A concurrence of circumstances had rendered the state of things clear. The union of priests, bishop, and people against her, she regarded as an obvious indication of providence, that, in the language of Scripture, she must "shake off the dust of her feet against them," and go to another city.

17. And what were the feelings under which she was

thus compelled, for a second time, to leave her field of labor, and to go again, she knew not whither? "My soul," she says, "leaving all to God, continued to rest in a quiet and peaceable habitation. O Thou, the great, the sole object of my love! If there were no other reward for the little services which we are able to perform, than this calm and fixed state above the vicissitudes of the world, would it not be enough? The senses, indeed, are sometimes ready to start aside, and to run off like truants; but every trouble flies before the soul which is entirely subjected to God.

"By speaking of a fixed state, I do not mean one *which can never decline or fall*, that being only in heaven. I call it fixed and permanent, in comparison with the states which have preceded it, which, being in the mixed life, and without an entire and exclusive devotedness to God, are full of vicissitudes and variations. Such a soul, one which is wholly the Lord's, may be troubled; but the sufferings which it is called to endure, affect only the outside, without reaching and disturbing the centre. Neither men nor devils, though they discharge all their fury against it, can permanently harm a soul that is free from selfishness, and is in union with the divine will. No sufferings whatever could ever affect it, neither more nor less, neither within nor without, *were it not permitted for wise purposes from above.*"

18. The pressure which rendered it necessary for her to depart from Thonon, was applied with equal skill and power to La Combe also. Such were the ecclesiastical relations between him and the bishop, that the wish of the latter, and still more his injunction, that he should depart from the diocese, rendered it inconsistent, and perhaps impossible for him to remain. The only charge alleged against him, so far as we can perceive, was, that he was associated with Madame Guyon, in the diffusion of a spirituality, which was both novel and heretical, namely, the life of God in the soul,

both in the form of justification and of sanctification, *sustained by faith alone as its primary element.*

19. Madame Guyon wrote to the bishop. The import of the letter is now unknown; but it seems to have been without effect. La Combe also wrote to him, as he was about leaving. The letter, which is long, is given in full in the Bishop's Life. The following is an abridgement of it, containing those parts of it which would be most likely to be interesting.

TO BISHOP D'ARANTHON.

"In accordance with your desire, sir, I am about to leave your diocese. Not merely because your wish has been so strongly expressed, that it naturally has the effect of an injunction, but because God, the Eternal Wisdom, has indicated, in the arrangements of his providence, that the time of my departure has arrived. I recognize the instrumentality; but I do not forget him who operates through the instrument. It was by God's order that I came. It is by God's order that I depart.

"You have known my views on the subject of Sanctification; for I took an opportunity to communicate them to you in private. And prompted, as I supposed, by a sense of duty, I expressed a strong wish, that they might be blessed to yourself *personally.* This was the beginning of a course of treatment, which, without giving utterance to the spirit of complaint, I may justly characterize as unusual and hard. I will not now undertake to justify myself against the persecutions which I have experienced. I may, perhaps, be excused for saying, however, that my adversaries have professed to sit in judgment upon what they have never studied, and what they did not understand. Unacquainted as they really were with what they undertook to condemn, they obtained, nevertheless, an access to the ear of the bishop, which was refused to us. If this extraordinary procedure resulted in injury and suffering, we have this consolation, which silences every murmur, that God in his wisdom permitted it.

"Pardon, respected sir, the feelings of a poor Religious, who thinks he has known something of the power of the inward life, if in leaving the scene of his labors, in a cause so dear as that of true holiness of heart, he drops a tear of regret at the desolation which he witnesses. Sad and terrible will be the account, which must at last be rendered for the opposition which has been raised against a cause, for which Christ shed his blood. A cause dear to God, who in his goodness had sent from France to our poor Savoy, a lady whose example and instructions could hardly have failed to extend in every direction the love of holiness.

"But she and others, who have labored in the same cause, are about to leave these regions; and they will carry to other places those doctrines of the interior life, which have been banished from the churches over which you preside. Of what value is the church, and of what value are labors for the church, without the inward life, without the religion of the heart? By what unhappiness is it, respected sir, that you, who have labored for your diocese so much, and in many respects so successfully, have permitted this crown of your labors to be taken from you? I speak in kindness and sincerity. Why have the advocates of experimental religion been banished? Why have you smitten me with an ecclesiastical *interdiction?* Me, who have been attached to your interests, submissive to your orders, and jealous for your authority? But it is useless to ask, as it would be unavailing to explain. My conscience bears me testimony, that I would have given more than one life if I had possessed it, for *you;* for the good of your own soul, and for the good of those under your charge. This has been my prayer, and many years have I earnestly offered it, that you, and that others through you, might know the full power of God's inward grace. In the bonds of the gospel I go hence to other lands. Times and places change, but the deep prayer of my heart, which I trust will yet be answered, remains unaltered.

"FRANCIS DE LA COMBE."

20. There are various religious remarks of Madame Guyon, made from time to time in connection with these events, which seem to me profitable. On one occasion, speaking of a religious friend, whose character was defective in some respects, she says, "formerly it was with great difficulty that I could bear her manners, characterized as they were by an unrestrained vivacity. But since God has given me grace to regard every thing, and to love every thing *in its relation to himself*, I find a great facility in bearing such defects and faults of my neighbor. The principle of benevolent sympathy has become strong, so that I feel for all, and have a readiness to please and oblige every one, and such a compassion for their calamities and distresses as I never had before.

21. "I make, however, a distinction. I more easily bear the defects of those, who are beginners in the Christian life, and are yet weak in the faith, than of those who are more advanced and are stronger. Towards the first I feel my heart enlarged with tenderness; I speak to them words of consolation. Towards the latter I feel more firmness of purpose. When I see defects in advanced souls, I cannot, without much inward suffering, forbear reproving them. The more any soul is favored with eminent grace, the more easily is it united to me; the more violent, also, is the weight and suffering I feel for it, if it slip or turn aside ever so little. Such have been the dealings of the Lord with myself, that I seem to discern with great clearness both the strength and weakness of its principles; so that perceiving where it fails

and what it wants. I feel myself bound in religious duty to declare it. I do not mean to say, that I find myself wanting in kindness or condescension to souls of this description; but duty, which in a sanctified mind acts almost with the certainty of an instinct, requires more of strictness, and less of mitigation and forbearance, than in respect to others.

22. "In my intercourse with others I find this also in my experience. I can converse much with the weak; but I am not inclined to converse much with the strong. With those, who are in the beginnings of the religious life, and who need instruction, the principle of holy love, acting under the direction of Providence, leads me to converse on such topics, and for so long a time as seems to be necessary. I feel that I am doing good. But conversation, for the sake of conversation, with those who are so advanced that they do not need it, and when the providence of God does not especially call to it, is repugnant to me. The human inclination, which corrupts every thing, is apt to mingle with it. The same things which would be right and profitable, when God, by the intimations of his Holy Spirit, draws us to them, become quite otherwise when we enter into them of ourselves. This appears to me so clear, that I prefer being a whole day with the worst of persons, in obedience to God, before being one hour with the best only from choice and a human inclination."

23. She also, in connection with this period of her personal history, makes some remarks which seem to me worth inserting here, on the subject of LIVING BY THE MOMENT. This is a subject of much practical consequence to those who aim to live continually with God. She remarks, in the first place, that the whole rule of conduct to a soul which is wholly devoted to God, is the *order of divine providence.* God's providence is his agency in events made known in

time. Consequently every successive moment has something which tends to indicate his will.

"If the soul," she says, "faithfully gives itself up to the will of God, as thus made known in his providential order, it will be likely to do all things right and well. And if, while it thus gives itself up to God's will, it fully believes in God's promise that he will protect those who confide in him, it will have every thing it wants, and at the same time be free from care. This is the true life; because then being in harmony with his will, we live *with* God; and receiving every thing from him, in the exercise of faith, we live *on* him. God loves what is of his own will and his own order."

24. "Few are the souls," she adds, "that give themselves up faithfully to God, in the order of his providence, as it is developed *moment by moment.* They have too much of a will of their own, their desires run out too strongly in various directions, to accept readily and fully that '*daily bread,*' whatever it may be, which God's providence now presents. Sometimes persons get out of the position of the present moment, which I may properly call the *divine moment*, by their too earnest desires to do good. We are not at liberty to do good, except that good which is appropriate to the present moment. That good, which is good in itself considered, becomes evil by being placed in a wrong position; because it is good done inappropriately and in violation of God's arrangements, and therefore at the expense of the highest good, namely, conformity to the divine will.

25. "It is here that we find the occasion of so many falls by Christians. They do not live by the *moment;* they do not make soul and body appropriate to God's time, which is the *present* time. And going out of the present moment, they may be said in a certain sense to go out of God, whose habitation in time, considered relatively to the human perception, is not in the past, which is *gone*, nor in the future

which does *not exist*, but in the divine NOW. Around this heaven constructed centre, all commands and all promises, and all effusions of grace, and all the helping visits of unseen angels cluster together. He who does not correctly estimate the present moment, in the calmness of inward recollection, will be likely to find himself out of God's order, and thus fall into sin. Through a false estimate in one direction, his desires and purposes may fall below the line of duty; and by a false estimate in another direction, taking into view relations and interests which are not appropriate to the present time, the same desires and purposes may become so intense, so exaggerated, so wayward, that sin there also 'lies at the door.' But when, with a heart wholly given to God and in the exercise of faith, we live in the present moment, considered in itself alone and in its necessary and just relations, all goes right and well.

26. "This appears to me very clear. As a dislocated bone, out of the place in which the economy of divine wisdom had fixed it, gives continual pain till it is restored to its proper order, so the many troubles of life come from the soul's not abiding in its place, and not being content with the order of God, and with what is afforded in that order *from moment to moment*. If men rightly knew and appreciated this secret, harmonizing with whatever is, *viewed in its divine relations*, no voice of murmur would be heard in the heart, and no cloud of rebellion would darken on their brow. But, alas, instead of being content with what they have, they are ever wishing for what they have not; and are thus unhappy under a yoke which would otherwise be easy to them; while the soul which enters into the present moment, viewed as God's moment, and estimated therefore in the divine light, is already in the sweet peace of Paradise.

"Whence comes it, that we often find persons, who are poor and suffering, experiencing, nevertheless, great contentment; while princes and potentates, who abound to profusion, are often wretched and unhappy? It is because the man who is not satisfied with the dispensations of the present moment, and, consequently, is not content with what he now has, will never be without craving desires; and he who is the prey of such unsatisfied desires, can never be content, can never be happy. It is the *order of God*, received just as it presents itself, and with a heart fully acquiescent, which renders the saints in heaven infinitely content and happy, though very unequal in glory.

27. "Souls in the natural life, and even those which are partially sanctified, have various strong and ardent desires, running in various directions; but the desires of souls, which are truly sanctified, are consummated in the divine moment. Some persons have desires which are very good in themselves, such as the desire to suffer martyrdom for God; others have a strong desire for the salvation of particular individuals among their neighbors; and others again have a strong desire to see God revealed in his glory. All this is excellent; but he, who, without having any one of these desires, nevertheless desires what God would have him desire at the *present moment*, is infinitely more content, and glorifies God more. God is as inflexible in subjecting good desires to his own order, and in requiring their development in his own way, as he is in repressing evil desires. A man is far from experiencing the full grace of God, who desires martyrdom, but is restless under the yoke of divine providence, which places martyrdom beyond his reach, and requires him to glorify God in the humblest and most retired avocations of life. The true desire, the right desire, is that which comes in the divine order; and the divine order can never be known and appreciated, except in connection with a knowledge of the developments of the present moment. At one time the Apostle Paul made tents in God's

order; at another time, he preached eloquently on Mars Hill, at Athens, *in the same divine order;* but in both cases he glorified God equally. If we are right in motive, and right in place, exercising all the requisite faith in God at the same time, ALL WILL BE WELL."

28. Such are the remarks, expanded and illustrated a little, in order that they might be the more clearly understood, which, with an insight hardly more religious than it is philosophic, she makes on this interesting subject. Acting on the principles, which she thus lays down, she had reason to think, that the order of God, which is only another name for the providence of God, which had hitherto rendered her afflicted and wandering life a wonder to herself, called her once more to depart. The following stanza from one of her poems, may be regarded as expressive of her feelings at this time.

"Father adored! Thy holy will be done;
Low at thy feet I lie;
Thy loving chastisement I would not shun,
Nor from thine anger fly.
My heart is weak, but weaned from all beside,
And to thy will resigned, whate'er betide."*

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* Select Poems of Madame Guyon, translated into English, Churchhill's edition.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Season of retirement. Commences writing her larger Treatises on religious experience. Her work, entitled Spiritual Torrents. Feelings with which she commenced this work. Origin of its name. The progress of the soul compared to torrents descending from the mountains. Abstract of some of its leading doctrines. Degrees of faith. Inward crucifixion. The New Life, or the state of the soul, when it has been subjected fully to the process of inward crucifixion. Remarks upon the style of this work.

It was in the course of the year 1683, during her residence at Thonon, that she first began to add to her other efforts in the cause of religion, attempts at prolonged and formal Treatises on the subject of religious experience. She was at that time a resident in the House of the Ursulines. Worn down with the fatigues of continual conversation, she gave out word that she stood in need of retirement, and that she would not see company for a number of days. She was enabled to carry her purpose into effect; but she says, that it was with some difficulty that people would consent to leave her in repose even for a short time. In this season of religious retirement, rendered necessary by her poor health and continual labors, she had very full and joyous communion with God. "It was then," she says, "that I let myself be consumed with love all the day long."

2. During this retirement, endeavoring to ascertain, as she naturally would, in what way she could most glorify

Him, who was the sole object of her love, it occurred to her, that in those periods when physical debility would not allow labors of a different kind, she might do something more with her pen. The suggestion, which, under the circumstances of the case, she thought she could justly regard as coming from a divine source, caused her not only serious deliberation, but some trial of mind. But as soon as she became satisfied that it was God's will, she no longer hesitated. She felt that in some respects she was unqualified for an undertaking so important; but she was willing, in this as in other things, to do whatever God had given her the power to do. It was under these circumstances, that she commenced her religious work, entitled the SPIRITUAL TORRENTS.

"When I first took up my pen for this purpose," she says, "I knew not the first word I should write. The subject was dark and mysterious before me. But when I began, it gradually opened to my mind; suitable considerations presented themselves readily and abundantly. Feeling relieved and strengthened in relation to the duty, which Providence had thus imposed upon me, I was enabled to write an entire treatise on the principle of Faith, considered in its inward and sanctifying action. I illustrated some of the leading ideas of the work, which describes the progress of the soul from the commencement of its inward life to its union with God, by a reference to streams or torrents flowing from mountain tops, with greater or less rapidity, and with greater or less directness, and mingling at last in the ocean."

3. It is this allusion to streams or torrents, and the illustrations she employs from that source, which gives name to the work. The comparison is suggested, partly by its own appropriateness, and partly by a passage in the prophet Amos, 5th chapter, and 24th verse, — "But let judgment run down as waters, *and righteousness as a mighty stream.*"

In the French and Latin translations of the passage,* which she would naturally consult in her examinations of it, the words TORRENS and TORRENT take the place of the word *stream* in the English translation. "Let righteousness roll down *as a mighty torrent*."

4. Some of the principles of this work, which is written with great vigor of imagination and of language, although deficient in some degree in logical development, are as follows:

(1.) Souls, coming as they do from God, who is the great ocean of life that gives all and receives all, have an instinctive and strong tendency, when that element of moral and religious life, which they have lost by the Fall, is restored to them by divine grace, to return again and mingle in eternal union with that divine source from which they came.

(2.) And this tendency to re-union depends upon nature, as well as upon origin. God, from whom the soul came, and in whose likeness it is made, is holy. Holiness loves holiness. It cannot be otherwise. And just in proportion as the fallen soul is restored by divine grace and made holy, precisely in that degree, and on the ground of a likeness of nature, is there a tendency to unite with God, who is all holy. And the tendency is mutual; existing on the part of God, as well as on the part of the creature.

(3.) But the instinct of return, which exists in the soul so soon as it is truly the subject of the divine operation, and resumes anything of the divine nature, is different in different persons. This is illustrated by streams or torrents, that come down from the mountains. From the ocean they came; — to the ocean they are returning. Righteousness shall flow on *as a mighty stream.* But all streams do not flow alike.

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* Amos, 24. — LATIN — Revelabitur quasi aqua judicium, et justitia quasi TORRENS FORTIS.

FRENCH — Jugemens se manifesteront comme de l'eau, et justice en façon d'un GROS TORRENT.

(4.) Some torrents, which may be regarded as representing one class of regenerated souls, are feeble in their beginning. They acquire strength; but they do it gradually and slowly. Sometimes they meet with an impediment, a rock or some other obstacle, which obstructs their progress for a time, and makes them no better than a standing pool. When they have escaped from this impediment, they still retain their former characteristics; and wind onward circuitously and slowly. They are not altogether without life, and without utility. Here and there their banks are green; and a few scattered flowers drink refreshment from their waters. After a while they depart from sight; perhaps their inconsiderable waters are dissipated and drunk up in the wide expanse of some arid plain. Perhaps they pass on and are lost in some other larger river, or are mingled and lost in the bosom of some lake. They do not reach the ocean.

(5.) Other torrents, which represent another class of regenerated souls, seem to start from a fuller fountain, and more rapidly to acquire increase. As they advance onward towards the sea, they expand into rivers. Many are the vessels, larger and smaller, which they bear; rich is the merchandise which floats upon them; but freighted with goods both from heaven and from earth, they seem to grow sluggish in their own opulence. The impulse which bears them on to the great deep, slumbers. And, winding here and there, they empty themselves at last into some bay, or sound, or other arm of the sea, and there are lost.

(6.) All have a tendency to the sea; but with much variety of impulse and progress. And, accordingly, she goes on to state, that there are other torrents, which represent another class, namely, those who *hunger and thirst after righteousness,* who cannot and will not be satisfied, till their souls are brought into the most intimate union with God. If these torrents are turned from their course by any obstacle, they resume it as soon as possible, and by the nearest possible direction. If they meet with obstacles so extensive as to stop them entirely, they do not become inert and stagnant, but they get strength moment by moment, accumulating wave upon wave, till they pass triumphantly over them. They bear their treasures; but they will not stop. They nourish the flowers upon their banks; but they leave them to shine in their beauty and fragrance, and pass on. They are not satisfied, till they reach and mingle with the great ocean. There they are made one with the water of waters; they become a part of it; vast navies float upon its bosom; the world's commerce passes over it.

(7.) It is an illustration of this kind, whether more or less rhetorically and theologically appropriate we will not undertake to say, which gives name to the book. After this general introduction, we come to the principles of it. And one is, which has already been referred to, that there are some souls, (those in particular who are represented in the third class,) in whom the Spirit of God inspires the desire of progress very distinctly and powerfully, who hunger and thirst to be holy, who cannot and will not rest till their hearts and their wills were made one with God. Their tendency is to the Divine Centre or God, in distinction from the Personal centre, or Self. Those who are in the Divine Centre, harmonizing as they do with God himself, are both right and safe. Those, who are in the centre of Self, are not and cannot be either the one or the other.

(8.) The central principle of the Divine Mind is its WILL. Its will, philosophically considered, encircles, embodies, and concentrates the whole. The centre of the human mind, constructed originally after the image of the Divine Mind, is the WILL also. And, accordingly, when the human will becomes entirely harmonious with the divine will, the human centre is lost and made one in the divine centre.

Like the mystic writers generally, like Cudworth and Leighton among English writers, the authoress of the Spiritual Torrents, insists much upon the harmony of the human and Divine Mind. This is her mode of expression; a mode of expression, which, when properly understood, not only conveys the highest religious truth, but is based, as it seems to me, upon a correct mental philosophy. Sin is only another name for divergency from God, who is the Truth and the Good. When we recognize the great truth, that our life is from God, and accept his appointed way of return through Christ our mediatorial sacrifice, and cease to be divergent by becoming one with him, then we cease to sin. And this is always the case when the human will is entirely in harmony with the divine will.

(9.) A distinction is to be made between a will which is perfectly harmonious, and a will which is merely submissive. A merely submissive will is one which is brought into that position by the sentiment of duty. We speak now of a will, of which submission, and *nothing more than submission*, can be predicated. A will, entirely harmonious. on the contrary, carries with it the *heart*, as well as the conscience. The will of an obedient servant, who does what he is bound to do, is submissive. The will of the affectionate son, who not only does what he is bound to do, but *loves* to do it, is not only submissive but is harmonious, is not only concordant, but is *one*. The servant is in union by the agreement of relations; the son is in union by the agreement of nature. The one is in union, because as a moral being he is not at liberty to do otherwise than he does; the other is in union, because his desires correspond with his moral sentiments, and his affections accept and ratify what his conscience dictates. So that when Madame Guyon in sists so much as she does on a perfect union with the divine will as the highest result of Christian experience, she means something more than that union of the will, which consists in a mere cessation from rebellion; she means an union *which carries the heart with it.*

(10.) And then the question comes, How is this harmony to be brought about; a harmony, which places the centre of all human wills in the centre of the Eternal Will? And the answer is, just in proportion as we dislodge the human life from its own centre, which is Self, it has a tendency, by the law of its own nature, to seek the True Centre, which is God. But what is it for the human life to be loosened and dislodged from its own centre? It is to recognize, in everything which is appropriate and necessary to it, its entire dependence on God, and to be willing to receive every such thing in God's way, in God's time, and on God's conditions. And in the first place it must renounce salvation from itself, in order that it may receive salvation from God through Christ. And then, in the exercise of the same self-renunciation in which it receives forgiveness for past sins, it must be willing to receive also its strength, its wisdom, its moral and religious good, what may be called *its daily spiritual bread*, from God, living upon the Divine Fountain which flows unceasing to those who are willing to receive life from the Divine Life, through the operation of the Holy Ghost dwelling in the soul.

(11.) And it is here that the struggle begins; it is here that the struggle is continued. When men begin to see that they are lost *out of God*, and when God implants within them the instinct of return, and they begin to put forth their hands and to struggle in the right direction, they then begin to feel, and not till then, the strength of the chains which bind them. The first struggle is to renounce all fondness and all claim for agency and merit in the matter of their salvation from the penalty of their past sins. So that the first crucifixion of self begins at the cross of Christ.

Terrible is the struggle oftentimes at this point. God can never yield, because, being the Eternal Truth, and having all truth, especially all moral truth, embodied as it were, and realized, and made a true life in himself, he never can violate the truth. It is an eternal truth, or if it be preferred, it is an eternal *law* in morals, — the opposite of which is an eternal falsehood, because it never was and never can be the law, — that, where there is crime, there must be suffering. And suffering which attends upon crime and is the *necessary result of crime*, is not merely suffering, but is retribution, is *punishment*. This relation of crime and punishment God can never alter, unless, by an arbitrary act, he can change right into wrong and wrong into right, which would be inconsistent with the very idea of God. God, therefore, in the person of his Son, not only knowing but realizing in himself the immutability of the requisitions of the law, took the penalty of its violation on himself, in order that man, who had incurred the penalty by sin, might be forgiven. And it was not merely an exhibited or apparent suffering, which God "manifested in the flesh," endured; not a mere *spectacle;* but a real suffering. God, therefore, because He cannot possibly meet him on any other ground or in any other place, unless he meets him as a righteous judge, meets man in the cross of Christ; — He meets him on Calvary and not on Sinai. And the first act of submission, the first act in which man recognizes God as the Giver of the true life, *is, and must be there.*

(12.) But this is only the beginning of the work. The purchase of forgiveness in Christ is the purchase of *a new life;* and all additional blessings flow through him. Man is not only to be detached from his own centre in the matter of forgiveness; but is to be detached from the same centre, which is Self, in everything else. As every good thing really comes from God; so every good thing must be *received* and *recognized* as coming from him in the exercise of faith. And it is here that we see the necessity of inward crucifixion, and the principles on which it must be conducted. The soul must be detached from everything, on which it rests *out of God.*

(13.) There are two great principles on which this result depends; that by which, in the language of Madame Guyon, we become *nothing in ourselves*, or in other words, which will be more likely to be understood at the present time, that by which, in the spirit of self-renouncement, we give ourselves to God entirely, in an act of unreserved consecration; and the other is, that we fully believe in God as *accepting* the offering which we have thus made. And it is here often, that we find the exercise and trial of our faith. Strong faith is requisite. Relying simply upon the promise, which is given and pledged to all those who are fully consecrated, we are to receive God as our God and portion, for the present and the future, in all that he now is, and in all that he can be to us in time to come; in the plan of salvation, in the administration of his providences, and in the "daily bread" of his grace, dispensed to us moment by moment. And He becomes to us in this way, not only all that He is in fact, but all that we *can desire him to be;* because, relying on his promises as virtually the substance or realization of that which is hoped for, we find our desires already fulfilled by anticipation; although his present administration in respect to us may be, in some respects, mysterious and trying. The soul, therefore, which is represented by the torrent, that rushes onward to the ocean as its resting-place, and is not satisfied with anything short of or out of the ocean, lays itself as it were, in the first place, on the *altar* *of sacrifice.* Its language is, "I am thine. *Make me what, with thine assistance, I desire and purpose to be.*" God, in accepting the gift, accomplishes upon it that for which it was given.

(14.) It is at this point that Madame Guyon begins to describe accurately and minutely, the further progress of inward crucifixion in its details. In doing this, she does not rely upon the statements of other experimental writers, with which she began about this time to form a more general acquaintance; but seems to have drawn chiefly from what she herself had passed through, and from what she had witnessed in other cases, which had come under her personal notice.

I do not know that it is necessary to repeat the details of this part of her work. They are certainly very interesting in themselves, and are conveyed with great power of language. And what is particularly worthy of notice, is, that she shows, in souls that are prepared for it by divine grace, how the principle of *Faith* develops itself step by step, and in higher and higher degrees, in precise accordance with the process of inward crucifixion. Just in proportion as the soul is sundered from the ties which bound it inordinately to the earth, just in that proportion, it increases in the strength of its faith, and rises into harmony with God. In fact, sundered from the world, which was its previous source of life, it could not live without faith in that which is separate from the world. It is on the basis of this general view, that she describes the progress of the inward life, not merely by degrees of crucifixion, but chiefly and especially by *degrees of faith.*

(15.) The soul, in the first degree of faith, has a true life in God, but not a full or perfect life. The soul, in this degree, loves God, but it adheres too strongly and takes too much delight in the *gifts* of God (meaning here the external gifts, such as the conveniences of life and the pleasures of society and friendship,) considered *as separate from God himself.* It recognizes and loves, in general, the providences of God ; but when they approach very near and become personally very afflictive, it is apt to show something of restlessness and unsubmission. Combined with a disposition to do the will of God, there is too much of '*empressement*,' or undue eagerness to do it, and not enough of that humility and quietness of spirit, which waits for his time of doing it. It performs religious duties, and loves to perform them; but it has a choice as to time and place, so fixed and strong, as sometimes to be out of harmony with providential arrangements, and to interfere with other duties.

(16.) In the second and other higher degrees of faith, as she describes the mind's spiritual progress, the soul, in undergoing the process of inward crucifixion, becomes detached from these faults and sins. But there still remain others. The soul, for instance, in this stage of its progress, rests more or less upon a human arm; — human opinions, which are adverse to its course, cause it trouble; human approbation and human applause sometimes give it strength, which would be better if it came directly from God. But God, operating by outward processes in carrying on the work of inward crucifixion, takes away one prop after another, smiting the arm of humanity which takes the place of the divine arm, till the soul (which it cannot do, without an increase of faith corresponding to the facts and process of such inward crucifixion,) rests solidly upon the great Centre, and upon that centre alone.

(17.) Again, the soul has its virtues, perhaps high and eminent virtues; its good intentions, its patience, its benevolence, its truth, its temperance, its great number of outward good works. But when, in the exercise of its virtues, whether inward or outward, it has done something right and good, something for itself or its neighbor, it sometimes feels an emotion of self-gratulation, and is inclined to take a little merit to itself. It perceives this disposition and laments it; but has not as yet gained the victory over it. But God in his providence smites all such feelings, which are obviously drawn from a wrong source, and are hostile to the true inward life; until it perceives and realizes at length, in the exercise of a truer and higher faith, that its good feelings are from God, and that they are good only so far as they *come from him alone.*

(18.) And there is yet a higher degree of faith, which is brought into exercise in connection with a still more intimate and deeper experience of inward crucifixion. It is sometimes the case, that souls, in the experience of God's favors, are perverted by the very gifts which they receive from his hand. They mistake the gift for the Giver, the joy for Him who is the source of their joy. And God then, if he has determined to sanctify this soul, so orders his providences, as to render it the subject both of inward and outward sorrow; and in such a degree and such a manner, that he will appear to it to have entirely withdrawn his favors. This is a very trying situation. It is impossible for the soul to live in it for any length of time, without the experience of a very high degree of faith. The soul that can stand this test, that can drink the bitterness of this cup, especially when it is offered without any mitigating ingredient, cannot have anything less than an *assured faith;* a faith, which fully purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. He who has this confidence in God, is necessarily the friend of God according to the promise, and cannot be separate from him, either in the affections or the will. It is from that moment that the death of nature is experienced; which is nothing else than the cessation of all wrong and inordinate desires and purposes, and entire union with God in everything that he loves and everything that he wills. Thus is the declaration of Scripture made true; "Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world; and this is the victory that *overcometh the world, even our faith.*"

(19.) When all that separated from God is taken away, when every inordinate desire has undergone the process of excision, so as to be reduced into its place, and to be put into entire position and agreement, with the one great and over-ruling desire of conformity to God's will, then begins the new life in the higher sense of the terms. The soul no longer possesses anything which it calls its own; but may rather be spoken of as a *subject*, and, instead of possessing, may be said to be *possessed* by another; God himself comes to it, and dwells in it, as in his Holy Temple. It is not only obedient to God, which is a high state of grace, even when it costs considerable effort to render obedience; but its obedience is rendered in such a manner, so promptly and so lovingly, that God may be said to be *its life.* The soul has become nothing in itself; but it has gained all things *out of itself.* Disrobed of the life of nature, it is clothed with the life of grace. It has lost the inspiration and life of the creature, but it has gained the life of God.

(20.) And now all that has God in it, (and there is nothing which has not God in it *except sin,*) is its delight. The sky expands with a purer beauty; the flower opens with a sweeter fragrance; in the forest, and on the river's banks, it finds food for contemplation and holy love; it rejoices with those who rejoice, and weeps with those who weep; it is young and buoyant with the child, and wise and reverent with the aged; everything in human life is dear to it; it pities and forgives its enemies; like Him, who is embodied in it, it does good to the evil and unthankful; tears are dried at its approach; and smiles bloom like roses at the presence of its loveliness.

(21.) Those who have never experienced the transformations of thoroughly sanctifying grace, know but little of the purity, the peace, and the blessedness of such a soul. It has but little to say of itself; it has no dreams, no visions, no ecstasies. We mean to say, that it makes no account of them, separate from God. It lives by faith and not by sight. *Believing*, it asks nothing more. Its new life is all natural to it; a life which lives and acts of *itself*, without calculation and without effort. It is humble without knowing or speaking of its humility; it is divinely wise without analyzing its wisdom; it is full of kindness and love, apparently without any consciousness how kind and loving it is. It worships God even without formally thinking of God, because THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN IT. Its YEA is YEA, and its NAY is NAY, without suspicion. It is not more full of faith, than it is full of holy simplicity. It is like a little child. It is an infant Jesus.

(22.) Such are some of the doctrines of this interesting work. It is a work, which is written with much vigor and truth of conception, and with much freshness and strength of style; although a practised master of style would more carefully adjust the position of ideas; in other words, would adopt an arrangement more logically symmetrical. The terms, in which she describes the successive and deeply trying steps of a thorough inward crucifixion, remind one strongly of her own personal history. She describes in a great degree, though not exclusively, *from herself*. And this, while it contributes to the interest of the work, constitutes in reality one of its defects, considered as a work to be read and followed by others. It would not be entirely safe, to take the experience of any one individual in all its particulars, as the precise mode of the divine operation in all other cases. The truth of her inward experience, (that is to say, the truth or reality of the great principles involved in it,) is permanent; but the *mode* or manner of it, in some respects, may differ in different individuals. It may be proper to add further, that she was constitutionally imaginative. Consequently viewing things in a clear and strong light, she expresses herself more strongly than a person with less imagination would be likely to do. Her expressions, therefore, especially when compared with what she says, from time to time, in other places, can sometimes justly be received in a modified sense. The work can justly be considered, however, whatever criticisms it may be proper to make upon it, as a very valuable and remarkable contribution to the documents of religious experience, especially in the highest forms in which it seems to be realized in this life.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Leaves Thonon for Turin in the summer of 1684. *Mount Cenis. Her feelings at this time. Persons that accompanied her. Circumstances which led her to go to Turin. Marchioness of Prunai. Her journey through the Pass of Mount Cenis, and her reception at Turin. Labors at Turin. State of her religious feelings. Her efforts by means of written correspondence. Letter of advice to a young preacher. Of Dreams. The Dream of the sacred island. Dream of the beautiful bird. Remarks on the prayer of silence.*

Obliged, under the circumstances which have been mentioned, to leave Thonon, where she had been the instrument in the hands of God of accomplishing so much good, she decided for various reasons, to attempt to reach the city of Turin. This city, the capital of Piedmont, is situated one hundred and thirty-five miles southeast from the city of Geneva, and a little more than that distance from Thonon. Its site is on a vast plain at the foot of the Alps, on the Italian side, and at the confluence of the rivers Doria and Po.

The route would be, I suppose, from Thonon to Cham berri, through the cities of Geneva and Anneci, a distance, in a southwest direction, of fifty-five miles. From Chamberri it would lead in a southeast direction, through Montmeillant, to the celebrated Alpine pass of Mount Cenis, and thence to the town of Susa and the city of Turin.

Mount Cenis was not passable then, as it has since been rendered by the efforts of the French government, for car riages; but those who went over it, were obliged to go on foot or on mules, or were carried in litters borne by porters. A journey under such circumstances, along frightful precipices, and over mountains piled to the clouds, accompanied too by the unpleasant reflection that those who were prosecuting it had no home, no resting place, must have been exceedingly trying to any one whose mind was not sustained by strong faith.

2. It is about this time, that we find the following terms, descriptive of her feelings. To a mind thus sustained, nothing seems wonderful, nothing seems impossible. "The love of God," she says, "and of God alone, was my soul's great business. I seemed so entirely lost in God, as to have no sight of myself at all. It seemed as if my heart never came out of that Divine ocean. Oh! loss, which is the consummation of happiness, though operated through crosses and deaths! I could say with the Apostle Paul, that *Christ* lived in me; and that *I* lived no more. But if I was thus made one with him in nature, it seemed to me that I must be made one with him in suffering. The words, which are found in the Gospel of Matthew, were deeply impressed upon my mind. '*The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*'

"This I have since experienced in all its extent, having no sure abode, no refuge among my friends, who were ashamed of me, and openly renounced me at the time when there was a great and general outcry against me; nor among my relations, the most of whom declared themselves my adversaries, and were my greatest persecutors; while others looked on me with contempt and indignation. My state began to be like that of Job, when he was left of all. Or perhaps I might say with David, '*For thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face; I am become a stranger to my* *brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children;* a reproach *to men and despised of the people.'* "

3. In the summer of 1684, so far as can now be ascertained from the scattered and somewhat imperfect statements in this part of her history, she left Thonon, taking the route to Turin which has been mentioned, leading through Chamberri, the valley of the Maurienne, and over Mount Cenis. She was accompanied by Father La Combe, her spiritual Director, who was obliged to leave for similar reasons and under similar circumstances; by another ecclesiastic of high standing and merit, who had been for fourteen years a teacher in theology, but whose name is not given; and by a young lad from France, in the humbler walks of life, who had been apprenticed to some mechanic trade, and who was probably induced to accompany them for religious reasons. The females in this little company were Madame Guyon and her little daughter, whom, thinking she could not safely or properly leave her to another's care, she carried with her from place to place, accompanied by one of the maid-servants, who came with her from France, a poor and humble girl, but rich in that unchangeable faith which rests upon inward renouncement; who recognized in Madame Guyon a spiritual mother, and with something of a martyr's spirit shared in her wanderings and labors, and suffered with her in her long imprisonments.

The men were carried through the mountain passes on mules, the females on litters. This must have been to Madame Guyon a toilsome and trying journey. She, who but a few years before had resided amid the ease and elegances of the capital of France, was now a wanderer, with the precipice at her feet and the avalanche above her head. But God is the God of the rock and of the mountains, as well as of the cultured field and valleys; and she saw in these mighty and terrific piles, which the lightnings had smitten but not destroyed, which the thunders had struck but never removed from their places, an emblem of the strength of that arm, on which her soul rested.

4. It is hardly necessary to say, that she did not take this course at the instigations of self, but under the intimations of that over-ruling Providence, which had become to her the rule of life. God, who had foreseen the necessity of her departure from Thonon, had prepared her a refuge in Turin. There was at that time in the city of Turin, a female of distinguished rank, the Marchioness of Prunai, — a lady remarkable alike for her position in society, her powers of mind, and her sincere piety. Her brother was at that time the principal Secretary of State to the Duke of Savoy. The Marchioness had been a woman of sorrow, having been left a widow at an early period of life. Owing to this, or to this in connection with other circumstances, which aided in showing her the vanity of worldly pleasures and honors, she quitted the noise and splendor of the Court, for the more silent satisfaction of a retired life. "This lady," says Madame Guyon, "was one of extraordinary piety. With many things in her situation, which might have furnished inducements to a different course, she nevertheless continued a widow, notwithstanding repeated offers of marriage. Her great object in doing this was, that she might, with less distraction, consecrate herself to Christ without reserve?"

5. The Marchioness of Prunai, whose intelligence and means of correspondence would be likely to keep her informed of the interesting movements of that time, especially those of a religious nature, had heard of the name of Madame Guyon. There was a similarity in their respective situations, which could not fail to interest her. The position of Madame Guyon in society, her early widowhood, her entire consecration to Christ's cause, her self-denying labors, corresponding in so many respects with her own situation and

her own feelings, touched the chord of heart-felt sympathy. Having heard of the sickness of Madame Guyon at Thonon, at a certain time, and of the troubles which were likely to await her there, she, of her own accord, sent to her a letter by express, conveying her Christian and friendly sympathy, and inviting her to come to Turin and to take up a residence with herself. In a subsequent letter, which repeated the invitation and urged it still more strongly, she included Father La Combe; foreseeing, probably, that he also would be likely to need a place of refuge.

"As the invitation was given," says Madame Guyon, "without any anticipation of it, and without any design on our part, it was natural and reasonable for us, under the circumstances of the case, to believe, that it was God's will for us to go. And we thought it might be the means of his appointment, seeing ourselves chased on the one side and desired on the other, to draw us out of the reproach and persecution, under which we labored."

6. It was under these circumstances, that this little company, with the world's curse and with God's blessing upon them, were winding their way through the valleys of the Maurienne, and over the cliffs of Mount Cenis, and along the banks of the Doria. It was the Lord, who casts up a highway for his ransomed people to walk in, that directed their steps. They were received at Turin by the Marchioness with all that kindness and Christian affection which her letters had led them to expect. La Combe remained here but a short time. He received, soon after his arrival at Turin, an invitation from the bishop of Verceil, a considerable town of Piedmont, about forty miles distant from Turin, to take up his residence there. To this invitation, which separated his field of labor from that of Madame Guyon for a time, he thought it his duty to accede.

7. It would seem that Turin was not regarded by Mad-

ame Guyon as a permanent field of labor. She had gone there under the existing circumstances, because, when she found herself obliged to leave Savoy so suddenly, she knew not where else to go. It was a place, therefore, of refuge and of rest; but still in some degree a place of religious effort. Her labors seem to have been chiefly with persons who held a position of influence in the religious world.

"It pleased God," she says, "to make use of me in the conversion of two or three ecclesiastics. Attached to the prevalent views and practices, their repugnance to the doctrines of faith and of an inward life, was at first great. One of these persons, when he first gained a knowledge of my objects, which were well known from letters which had been received at Turin, vilified me very much. But God at length led him to see his errors, and gave him new dispositions."

She mentions a number of incidents, which occurred during her residence at Turin; having relation, in part, to her domestic situation and arrangements, and partly to her efforts for the religious good of others. As they are not, however, of marked importance, it is perhaps unnecessary to repeat them.

8. "As to my own state at this time," she says, "it is difficult for me to describe it. Every inward motion, originating from self, seemed to be taken away and lost; so much so, that all the soul's movements and actions were now in God, under the dominion of his will, and entirely in union with him; the soul living in and of God, as the body lives in and of the air it breathes. Nothing entered into my imagination but what the Lord was pleased to bring; my heart, as it seemed to me, was pure; my will was firmly established in one direction. Human language cannot well describe this state. God only knows perfectly what it is. Souls, who are in this state, are very precious in the sight

of God, though outwardly there is nothing which especially attracts notice. They are the little ones of the earth; — meek, humble, quiet. Their humility, however, does not wholly protect them from the world's opposition. They are not unfrequently the objects of the world's scorn and rage."

9. The writings of Madame Guyon, all in the French language, have been published in their collected form, in forty volumes. Some of her works, published separately from the rest, and particularly her Life, have passed through numerous editions. It was but a short time before her residence at Turin, that she commenced these works, by writing the treatise on religious experience, the Spiritual Torrents, of which we have already given some account. But her labors in writing were not limited to formal treatises. We should do injustice to her desires for the good of others and to her labors, if we did not refer again to her written correspondence, as one of the means of religious influence, which she exercised.

The ease and vivacity with which Madame Guyon wrote, and the effect of what she wrote upon numerous persons, were remarkable. At Paris, at Gex, at Thonon, at Turin, at home and abroad, in the convent and the prison, her pen was constantly employed. It is hardly possible to name a period during the whole course of her life, when she did not keep up a wide correspondence. All classes of persons, no matter how high or how low, shared in her labors in this way, if there was any prospect of doing them good. Five printed volumes, which remain to us, are a sufficient confirmation of what has now been said. She informs us, that she received many letters from Paris during her residence at Gex; especially from persons who had a reputation for holiness. "Among others," she says, "I received letters from Mademoiselle de Lamoignon. Another young lady, who had access to my answers to her, was so moved with the statements made in them, that she sent me a hundred pistoles for the Religious House at Gex in which I resided; letting me know at the same time, that, whenever we wanted money, I had only to write to her, and that she would send me all I could desire."

10. Among her correspondents we find, beside her spiritual Directors, M. Bertot and Father La Combe, both of them men of learning and piety, the names of Poiret, a man celebrated for his knowledge, especially in the mystic or experimental theology, the Abbé de Wattenville of the city of Berne, Mademoiselle de Venoge of Lausanne, M. Monod, a man of some distinction both in science and in civil life, the Baron Metternich, the Marquis de Fenelon, who for some time was the French ambassador in Holland, and Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambray. To these, among many others whose names are now unknown, I think it would be safe, from the well known incidents of her history, to add the four daughters, all of them duchesses in rank, of the celebrated Colbert, together with two at least of their husbands, the Dukes Chevreuse and Beauvilliers.

11. From time to time, in the course of what follows, we propose to give portions of her correspondence. Dates and names are sometimes gone; but that does not essentially alter its value. Her letters generally relate to the subject of experimental religion, with other subjects not unfrequently introduced, which have a connection with it. The following letter was addressed to a young man, when he was about entering upon the practical duties of the ministry. But before giving it, it may be proper to remark a moment, upon her feelings in relation to this class of persons. She felt very much, as we have had occasion to see, for all persons; but perhaps for none more than those who had in charge the preaching of the gospel. She was brought much into

acquaintance and connection with them; and she warned them by word and by letter *to be faithful.*

"When the heart is once gained," she says, speaking of preachers, "all the rest is soon amended. But when, instead of faith in Christ and the renovation of the heart, they direct their hearers to the practice of outward ceremonies chiefly, but little fruit comes of it. If those priests who have charge of the country parishes, were zealous in inculcating *inward* instead of *outward* religion, the most desirable results would follow. The shepherds in tending their flocks, would have the spirit of the ancient Anchorites. The ploughman, in following the plough, would hold a blessed communion with God. Those who practise the mechanic arts, fatigued with their labors, would find rest, and would gather eternal fruits in God. Crimes would be banished; the face of the church would be renewed; Jesus Christ would reign in peace everywhere. Oh, the inexpressible loss, which is caused by a neglect of inward religion! What a fearful account will those persons be obliged to render, to whom this hidden treasure has been committed, but who have concealed it from their people!"

The letter, to which we have referred, addressed to a young man when he was about entering the ministry, is as follows.*

"SIR,

"The singleness of spirit and the candor, with which you have written to me, please me much. You are about to preach the gospel of Christ. In answering your letter, I will avail myself of the confidence you have placed in me, and endeavor to make one or two suggestions.

"And in the first place, I would observe, that a person in the responsible and solemn situation to which you are called, should never preach *ostentatiously.* In other words, be careful never to preach with the purpose of showing your intellectual power, your learning, and eloquence. Preach in a plain, simple manner; and let me add, that the matter is still more important than the manner. Be careful *what* you preach, as well as *how* you preach. Preach nothing but the gospel, — the *gospel of the kingdom of God.* And permit me to say further, it is exceedingly desirable, that you should preach it as a kingdom *near at hand;* as something, not a great way off, but to be received and realized *now.* Aim at the heart. If men seek the kingdom of God *within them*, in the exercise of faith and in right dispositions, instead of seeking it in outward ceremonies and practices, they will not fail to find it.

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* See the work, entitled, a Dissertation on Pure Love, by the Archbishop of Cambray, with an Apologetic Preface, Dublin, 1739.

"Another remark I have to make is this. Always remember that the soul of man was designed to be the *Temple of the living God.* In that temple, framed for eternity, He desires to dwell much more than in temples made with human hands. He himself built it. And when, in the exercise of faith, we permit him to enter, he exercises there a perpetual priesthood. God, therefore, is ready to come, and to take up his abode in the heart, if men are desirous of it. But men themselves have something to do. Teach those to whom you preach, to disengage their minds from the world, to be recollected and prayerful, and with sincerity and uprightness to seek, in the language of the Psalmist, 'the Lord and his strength, *to seek his face evermore.*' *

"Again, to render your preaching truly effective, it must be the product of love, and of entire obedience to the Spirit of God; flowing from a real, inward experience; from the fullness of a believing and sanctified heart. And, if this be the case, your sermons will not, I think, partake of a controversial spirit, which is much to be avoided. Men who are controversial, led away by strong party feelings, are apt to utter falsehoods, when they think they are uttering the truth. Besides, nothing, so far as I can perceive, so much narrows and dries up the heart as controversy. . . .

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* Ps. cv. 4.

"Shall I be permitted to make one other suggestion? It is very desirable, in the earlier part of your ministry especially, that you should spend a portion of your time, and that perhaps not a small portion, in communion with God *in retirement.* Let your own soul first be filled with God's Spirit; and then, and not otherwise, will you be in a situation to communicate of that divine fullness to others. No man can give what he has not; or if a man has grace, but has it in a small degree, he may, in dispensing to others, impart to them what is necessary for himself. Let him first make himself one with the great Fountain, and then he may always give, or be the instrument of giving, without being emptied.

"How wonderful, how blessed are the fruits, when the preacher seeks the divine glory alone, and lets himself be moved by the Spirit of God! Such a preacher can hardly fail of gaining souls to Him who has redeemed them with his blood. Preach in this manner, and you will find that your sermons will be beneficial to yourself, as well as to others. Far from exhausting you, they will fill you more and more with God, who loves to give abundantly, when, without seeking ourselves, and desirous of nothing but the promotion of his own glory, we shed abroad what he gives us upon others. . . .

"And on the other hand, how sad are the effects, when men preach with other views, and on other principles; — men, *who honor God with their lips when their hearts are far from him.* And they are not more injurious to others, than they are miserable in themselves. God has created them, on purpose to make them infinitely happy by possessing Him, but they make themselves utterly miserable by striving to possess all things *out of Him.* — I close with simply adding my supplication, that God may not only instruct you in the things which I have mentioned, but, moreover, may place you in a situation which will be most accordant with the divine glory and your own good.

"JEANNE M. B. DE LA MOTHE GUYON."

12. I turn now, for a few moments, to another subject. Her Autobiography, as appears from some statements she has made, was written by the order of her spiritual Director, La Combe; who particularly insisted, that she should write everything, which could properly be inserted, even if it should seem to be quite unimportant. In compliance with his injunction, and not supposing at that time, that what she wrote would be made public, she narrates, from time to time, some of her exercises in sleep. I do not suppose, that she attached more value to her dreams than others generally do; but even dreams, when properly considered, are not wholly destitute of value. They generally have relation to our waking thoughts, being of a religious tendency or otherwise, as the general state of our heart is; and I believe it is a remark of no less a philosopher than President Edwards, that we may profitably notice our dreams, in order to ascertain from them, in part, our predominant inclinations. Still they are not to be considered as of much account. And, accordingly, but little has been said of them hitherto. One or two will now be given, which she mentions as having occurred in this period of her life.

13. "It was about this time," she relates, "I had a dream, which left a sweet impression on my mind. As I dreamed, I seemed to see the wide ocean spread out before me. Many were its shoals and breakers, and its stormy

waters roared. In the midst of this troubled sea, there arose an island, lofty and difficult of access, where it touched the water; but in the interior where it arose again into a lofty summit, it was full of beauty. To this island and this interior mountain, I was in some way mysteriously carried. They said it was called Lebanon. Forests of cedars, and all beautiful trees, grew there. In the wood there were lodges, where those who chose might enter; and couches of repose were spread for them. Here, in this place of divine beauty, all things were changed from what we see them in the natural world. All was full of purity, innocence, truth. The birds sang and sported among the branches, without fear that insidious foes would watch and destroy them. The lamb and the wolf were there together in peace. So that I was reminded of that beautiful prophecy of Isaiah, — 'The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my Holy Mountain.'

"As I thus contemplated, in my dream, on this scene of innocence and beauty, who should appear before me but that beloved one, the spouse of holy souls, the SAVIOUR OF MEN! He condescended to come near me, to take me by the hand, and to speak to me. When we had looked round upon this divine work, this new Paradise, he directed my attention to the wide waters which surrounded us, to its rocks and foaming breakers, and pointed out to me here and there one who was struggling onward, with more or less of courage and hope, to this island and mountain of God. Some appeared to be entirely overwhelmed, buried in the waves but not yet wholly gone, and when the Saviour was directing my attention to these, and laying his injunction that such, in particular, should receive from me whatever sympathy and aid I could give them, my spirit was so much affected that I awoke. The sweet impression, which this dream left upon my spirit, continued many days."

Such a dream, without ascribing to it any supernatural import, was calculated to console her feelings and to confirm her in her general conviction, that her great business was to aid souls, amid the multiplied perils which beset them, in seeking the way of life.

14. At another time she relates as follows. "I saw in a dream, a great number of beautiful birds. Many were the people, who, with great emulation and eagerness, were pursuing them, and endeavoring to catch them. I was not a little surprised to find, that, while they avoided others, the birds came and offered themselves to me, without my using any effort to take them. Among the birds there was one of extraordinary beauty; there was none of the others which compared with it. Everybody was eager to get this; but it escaped them all, and me too as well as the rest. But afterwards it returned, and offered itself to me, when I had ceased to expect it."

When, a number of years afterwards, the celebrated Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambray, became acquainted with her views, and showed by the benevolence and sincerity of his life that he knew the value of them by practical experience, she would sometimes say, in allusion to this dream, that the beautiful bird had come to her.

"There was one peculiarity in her experience at this time, which, as it is not unfrequently mentioned by persons who have been in a similar state of mind, we may properly take this opportunity to explain. She denominates it the *prayer of silence.*

Everybody knows, or is supposed to know, what is meant by *silent prayer.* It is prayer of the ordinary kind, with the single exception, that it is prayer in words *unspoken.* But the PRAYER OF SILENCE, as the phrase is used in the higher experimental writers, is a prayer which is too *deep for words.* It is a state of the soul, which does not speak, because it has nothing to say. It has a consciousness of having God; and in the fullness and riches of its possession, it rests, it is silent, it asks nothing more. Having God, what is it possible for it to seek and to ask more than it now has? The reception of God's will, and delight in it, is the inmost throb and life of its life. That will is infinitely wise, unchangeable, and eternal. It cannot more change than God can change. And those who are perfectly in that will, by spiritual union, rest in it, just as God rests in it. And God, whose ceaseless activity always terminates in an object, which is fixed and established, because it is the expression of his own unchangeable will, has a rest perfect and eternal.

16. We have here the principle of the prayer. The soul, in its principle or life, may be in perfect union with God; and yet, from time to time it may be practically distracted and troubled with the cares, the pressures, and the trials of the world. When these distractions and cares cease, it returns to God in the exercise of spiritual recollection; thus placing God not only really but *consciously* in the centre. And in the high state of experience of which we are now speaking, the soul enters into communion with him not by formal prayer, which specifies consecutively its petitions, but by the *prayer of silence*, which, soaring above the rest and the trial, the joy and the sorrow of *time*, which are good or evil only in reference to the imperfections of the human view of things, rests calmly with God himself in God's place of rest, *the Eternal Will.* So strong is the instinct of the holy soul for this place of divine repose, that the lips are sometimes closed almost involuntarily. Its prayer is summed up in one word, THY WILL BE DONE; and believing with-

out a doubt, that this will, as each moment passes, is and must be done either into its positive or permissive forms, and having therefore its supplication fulfilled in the very act of supplicating, its prayer almost necessarily assumes the form of adoration without words; *it rests in God and is silent.*

This illustrates, I suppose, what she means when from time to time she speaks of *the prayer of silence.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Circumstances which led to her return to France. State of things in Italy at that time. Some account of Michael de Molinos, the author of the Spiritual Guide. Opposition to his views. Ill treatment of his followers. Course of the Count and Countess Vespiniani. Imprisonment of Molinos and death. Her return from Turin in Piedmont to Grenoble in France in the Autumn of 1684. Reasons for going to Grenoble. Advice of a female friend resident there. Her domestic arrangements. Remarkable revival of religion at Grenoble. Dealings of God with some individuals. Conversion of a knight of Malta. Her labors with the Sisters of one of the Convents of the city. Establishment of a Hospital for sick persons.

MADAME GUYON looked upon Turin, as we have already remarked, as a place of refuge, rather than a field of permanent labor. It is true, that during the few months of her residence there, she found something to do; and her labors were not without effect. But whether it was owing to Italian usages and manners, so different from those to which she had been accustomed, or to the difference of the language of the country, which, although she undoubtedly had command of it, must have been employed by her with some embarrassment, or to some other reasons, she found that her mind turned back to France. France called her to its bosom, not merely because it was the place of her birth; not merely because it was beautiful and attractive in its natural aspects, in its valleys and rivers and forests; but, more than all and above all, because Providence seemed to her to indicate, that her labors and her sufferings would be there.

Certainly she must have felt, that it was difficult, under the existing state of things, for the true light to shine much in Italy. It is well known, that the people of the Italian states have been subject, from that time to the present, to a yoke of ceremonial bondage, exceedingly adverse to a life of faith, although perhaps not wholly inconsistent with it. In France, for the most part, although the difficulty has been the same in kind, it has been less in degree.

2. As tending to illustrate and confirm what has just been said of Italy, it may be proper to mention a few facts of some historical and religious interest, which occurred at this time. It was about this period, that Michael de Molinos, a Spaniard by birth, a man of a respectable family and blameless life, made his appearance in Italy as a religious teacher and reformer. He published his views in a work entitled the Spiritual Guide, which, in a few years passed through twenty editions in different languages. The principles of the book, which have been much misrepresented and misunderstood, were similar in a number of respects, to those which are found in the writings of Madame Guyon. He not only insisted upon the possession of religion experimentally, but maintained also those high doctrines of present and effective sanctification, which she has so eloquently set forth. He attached comparatively but little value to ceremonial observances, but insisted much upon the religion of the heart, and upon faith as its constituting principle. His doctrines were received with great joy by many pious persons, in various parts of Italy. But this state of things continued only for a short time.

3. The watchful eye of Catholic authority noticed this movement. Molinos was seized and shut up in prison. Some hundreds of persons, who had received his doctrines with favor, were subjected to the same ill treatment; some of them persons eminent for learning and piety, others distinguished for rank. Among these last were the Count and Countess Vespiniani. The Countess, strong in that power and life of faith of which by God's grace she had become the possessor, answered the judges of the Inquisition with a firmness and decision which quite astonished them. She averred that she had been betrayed by the priests to whom, after the manner of the Catholic church, she had made confession; and declared openly and boldly, with all the terrors of an ignominious death before her, that she would never confess to a priest again, but to God only.

4. The Inquisitors, confounded at her boldness, and not daring to act with rigor against persons of such high rank, set the Countess and her husband at liberty, together with some others. But Molinos, whose irreproachable life and profound piety had made a general impression, was not permitted to escape. The doctrines of the Spiritual Guide, of which he was the author, were formally examined and condemned. A circular letter, emanating from the highest ecclesiastical authority, was addressed to the prelates of Italy, apprizing them that secret assemblies were held in their dioceses, where inadmissible and dangerous errors were taught, under the pretence of inculcating higher experimental doctrines. It was enjoined upon them to forbid and disperse those assemblies, and to pursue to justice such as should be found adopting novelties, which the Catholic church regarded as heretical and criminal. All suspected persons were closely examined; the books of Molinos, when they were found in their possession, were taken away; nor were they allowed to retain and read any other writings

which were regarded as of a similar character; such, in particular, as the Easy Method of the Inward or Contemplative Life by Francis Malaval,* and the Letters on the same subject of Cardinal Petrucci. Efforts were made to save Molinos, but they were ineffectual. He died in the dungeons of the Inquisition, after many years of close confinement, in which he exhibited the greatest humility and peace of mind.

5. It does not appear from anything which is said in her writings, that Madame Guyon knew much of the progress and results of this movement at this time. The greater number of those who were interested in it, resided in other parts of Italy. But she saw enough in the inordinate attachment to the existing forms, and in the prevalent deadness to the life of religion in the soul, to convince her, that there was but little hope of much success in the labors of one like herself, a woman, a stranger in a strange land, unfriended and comparatively unknown. Some years after, when her writings were subjected to examination, they were placed in the same category with those of Molinos; were denounced as equally heretical; and the ecclesiastical condemnation of the propositions of the Spanish priest was urged as one of the reasons for treating hers in a like manner.

6. It was under these circumstances that she turned her thoughts once more to France. She began to experience, more distinctly than she had previously done, the inward consciousness, that God designed to use her as an instrument to effect his purposes. And accordingly, in connection with this conviction, she could hardly fail to see, possessing

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* Pratique Facile pour élever l'Amè a la Contemplation. This work was translated from the French into the Italian by Lucio Labacci. — See, in reference to this and other similar works, Bossuet's *Actes de la Condemnation des Quietistes.*

powers the strength of which she had learned from the conflicts in which she had been engaged, that her labors would probably no longer be in obscure and remote places, and among peasantry. A mere *instrument* as she was, and as she felt herself to be, she began, nevertheless, to feel the greatness of her personal responsibility, and in particular, the importance of the mission to which God had called her; a mission, which was designed to recall her people from the sign to the thing signified, from the semblance to the possession, from the ceremonial to the substance.

7. It was in the autumn of 1684, after a residence there of some three or four months, that she left Turin for France. She returned by the route by which she came; along the Doria to Susa, over the Alpine Pass of Mount Cenis, and through the valley of the Maurienne to Montmeillant. Here, where it seemed to be necessary for her to decide where to go and what to do, she came to the conclusion, under that inward guidance of which she recognized God as the author, to go to the neighboring city of Grenoble. This city is but a short distance, about twenty-five miles, from Montmeillant; and unless she took a different direction and returned again to Thonon and Geneva, as she could not now do with much propriety, she could hardly avoid visiting it.

She mentions, also, as a circumstance which turned her mind in that direction, that she was personally acquainted with a lady residing in Grenoble, who was so situated as to give her some aid and advice. This lady, who was not merely an acquaintance but a personal *friend*, she speaks of as "an eminent servant of God."

8. Grenoble, which is about one hundred miles northwest of Turin, is an ancient and populous city of France, situated on the river Isere. It is a place which is rendered important by its position, its numbers, and its local influence. The

lady, whom Madame Guyon visited there, who seems to have been qualified to give an opinion on such a matter, advised her, for religious reasons and with a full knowledge of her objects, to go no further, but to take up her residence for a time in that city. Being acquainted with Madame Guyon, and sympathizing in her religious experience, her thoughts were occupied with the subject before this time; so much so that the reflections of the day had sometimes given existence and character to the dreams of the night. "Before I arrived at Grenoble," says Madame Guyon, "the lady, my friend who resided there, saw in a dream, that our Lord gave me a great number of children, all uniformly clad, and bearing in their spotless dress the emblem of their innocence and uprightness. Her first impression was, as she permitted her mind to dwell upon the subject, that God might in his providences establish me at Grenoble, for the purpose of taking care of the children of the Hospital. But as soon as she told it to me, it seemed to me, that another interpretation, more appropriate and more likely to be fulfilled, could be given to it. The impression left upon my own mind was, that God might so far bless my labors as to give me a number of spiritual children; — the '*little ones*' of the gospel; — children characterized by a new heart, by innocence, simplicity, and uprightness."

9. The lady, her friend, expressed the opinion very decidedly, that the providences of God opened to her here a field of labor, which would amply reward the culture bestowed upon it; and that God would make use of her as an instrument in glorifying himself. It appeared to Madame Guyon, therefore, under the circumstances of the case, that she should stop for a time here. And thinking it not best to rely upon the offices of private friendship for those accommodations which would be necessary for her, she made arrangements for herself, as soon as she conveniently could.

Her first idea was to remain for a short time at the public Inn or Hotel where she stopped when she first entered the city; but she found on making inquiry, that the arrangements which could be made there, would not answer all the purposes of herself and those who came with her. And accordingly she came to the conclusion, to place her little daughter, and the pious maid-servant who was her constant attendant, and who had shown her devotedness in thus twice crossing the Alps with her, as boarders in one of the Convents of the city. She herself, wishing to resign herself in solitude and silence to the dispositions of Him who is the absolute Sovereign, took retired rooms in the house of a poor widow, of whom she had learned a favorable character, from the friend whom we have mentioned.

10. She did not visit and make acquaintances in the first instance. It had not been her custom to do so in other places, where she had sojourned. Her unalterable conviction, that it indicates a want of religious wisdom and faith to run in advance of the divine providences, required her to wait and to watch, as well as to pray and to act. And the result showed, that those, who trust in the Lord, will find Him all that their faith expected and required him to be.

She sat in her solitary room in the city of Grenoble, in silent communion with God; a stranger almost unknown. But God, who gives all things to him who is so *poor in spirit* that he may be said to have nothing, honors and loves the sanctified heart. With such a heart God may truly be said to be *one.* A mighty power lives in the very presence of such persons, even when outward appearances and appliances seem to be against them. The language of Him in whom they trust is, — "*The battle is not yours, but God's. Fear not, nor be dismayed; for the Lord will be with you.*" *

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* 2d Chron. xx. 15, 17.

11. Although, with the exception of a single family, she had scarcely a personal acquaintance at Grenoble, it was soon generally known, by being circulated from one to another of those who had in various ways heard something of her history, that Madame Guyon was in the city. The result was, (and she speaks of it as something for which she was not prepared, and as quite unexpected to her,) that, within a very few days after her arrival some of the most pious persons in the city came to see her. The fact that she was already regarded and denounced by many as an unsettled fugitive and a heretic, did not prevent the sympathy of pious hearts. And many of those, who thus visited her, came not merely to express their respect for her character and their sympathy in her trials, but to receive that religious instruction which they regarded her as eminently qualified to give. It was here, as it had been, in a greater or less degree at Paris, at Gex, at Thonon, and at Turin. The Spirit of God attended her.

Some, despairing of spiritual relief from outward observances, and feeling much their need of instruction and aid, came with the inquiry, — What shall we do to be saved? Others, who had clearer perceptions, and whose state was a little more advanced, desired to receive suggestions and advice appropriate to growth in religion, of which they hoped they had experienced the beginnings. She says she was greatly aided in understanding the spiritual situation and the wants of those who visited her; so much so that the remark was common among them, and passed from one to another, that they each received something which was appropriate to their case. "It was Thou, O my God," she adds, "who didst all these things."

12. It was but natural, that those who thus came to her, impressed by the profound truths which she uttered, should announce to others the light and the spiritual blessings they

were thus receiving. And accordingly the number of those, whose minds were thus suddenly directed to this great subject, rapidly increased.

"People," says Madame Guyon, "flocked together from all sides, far and near. Friars, priests, men of the world, maids, wives, widows, all came, one after another, to hear what was to be said. So great was the interest felt, that for some time I was wholly occupied, from six o'clock in the morning till eight in the evening, in speaking of God. From the situation in which I was placed, it was not possible for me to aid myself much in the remarks I was called upon to make, by meditation and study. But God was with me. He enabled me, in a wonderful manner, to understand the spiritual condition and wants of those who came to me, and to say to them something which was pertinent and satisfactory. Many were the souls, which submitted to God at this time; God only knows how many. Some appeared to be changed, as it were, in a moment. Delivered from a state, in which their hearts and lips were closed, they were at once endued with gifts of prayer, which were wonderful. Marvellous, indeed, was this work of the Lord."

13. A member of one of the Catholic Religious Orders, established at Grenoble, visited her Conferences, and seems also to have sought private interviews. He was one of those persons, not unfrequently found, who, with the most favorable dispositions to become religious, fail, nevertheless, in possessing the requisite fidelity and courage to make themselves what they have a desire to be. In this conflict and vacillation of mind between desire and fixedness of purpose, he came to her, and "laid open," as she expresses it, "all the trials of his heart to her like a little child." She gave him such instructions as seemed applicable to his case; and God honored her in making her the instrument of great blessings to this sincere and humble man. "I felt," she

says, "that this person, who was emptied of self in proportion as he received of the divine fullness, was truly one of my spiritual *children*, one of the most faithful and closely united."

14. This good man, desirous that others should be the subjects of the same blessedness which he himself had experienced, brought to her a number of his companions. And they were all, in like manner, led to see their need of an interest in Christ, and to the experience of repentance. But this result, so auspicious and glorious, was incidentally the occasion of some trouble. The Superior of the Religious House to which these brethren belonged, and the person who sustained the office of Master of the Novitiates in the same House, were very much offended. Without knowing Madame Guyon personally, they nevertheless declared themselves decidedly and strongly against her.

"They were grievously chagrined," says Madame Guyon, "that a *woman*, as they termed me, should be so much flocked to, and so much sought after. For, looking at the things as they were in themselves, and not as they were in God, who not only does what pleases him but uses what instruments he pleases, they forgot, in their contempt for the instrument, to admire the goodness and grace, which were manifested through it. The good brother, however, who was first converted, persevered in his efforts, and after a time persuaded the Superior of the House to come and see me, and at least to thank me for the charities, of which he knew I had been the agent. He came. We entered into conversation with each other. The Lord was present, and was pleased so to order my words, that they reached his heart and affected him. He was not only affected, but was at last convinced and completely gained over to the views which he at first opposed. So much so, that he bought quite a number of religious books at his own expense,— books which contained the very views with which he and others had been so much dissatisfied,— and circulated them widely.

"Oh, how wonderful art Thou, my God! In all thy ways how wise! In all thy conduct how full of love! How well Thou canst frustrate all the false wisdom of men and triumph over all their vain precautions!

15. "In this Religious House," she adds, "there was a considerable number of persons, who sustained the relation of Novitiates, or of persons on probation. The new spirit of religious inquiry, [based upon the principle that man is a sinner, and that he must be saved by repentance and faith in Christ, and that faith in God through Christ subsequently is, and *must* be the foundation of the inward life,] the spirit of religious inquiry upon these principles reached the eldest of the Novitiates. It was a marked case. As he gave his attention to the subject, he became more and more uneasy, so much so that he knew not what to do. He could neither read nor study, nor go through in the usual manner with the prescribed forms of prayer, nor scarcely do any of his other duties. The member of this Religious House, of whom we have already spoken as having become interested first, brought this Novitiate to me. We conversed together for some time. In connection with what he said to me, I was enabled, with divine assistance, to judge very accurately of his inward state, and to suggest views which seemed to be appropriate to it. The result was remarkable. God's presence was manifested in a wonderful manner. While I was yet speaking to him, grace wrought in his heart; and his soul drank in what was said, as the parched ground of summer drinks in the rain. While he was yet with me, before he left the room where the conversation was held, the fears and sorrows of his mind departed. So far as could be judged at the time, he was a *new man in Christ.* He loved God, and God loved him.

16. "From that time he discharged all the duties, which before were performed with great reluctance, with readiness and joy. He now both studied and prayed readily and cheerfully, and discharged all other duties in such a manner that he was scarce known to himself or others. He was not only changed, but he was rejoiced to find that there was in him a *principle of life which made the change permanent.* God gave him his daily bread spiritually, as well as temporally; imparting what he could not obtain before, whatever pains he might take for it. Desiring to do good to others, he brought to me, from time to time, all the other Novitiates. They all of them became interested in the subject of their personal religious welfare, and were all affected and blessed, though in different degrees. The Superior of the House and the Master of the Novitiates, both of whom were ignorant of the instrumentality which had been employed, admired very much, so much so that they could not forbear expressing their feelings at the change which they witnessed in those under their charge. Conversing one day with a person connected with the House, whose merit and virtues they highly esteemed, and expressing their surprise at the great change which they witnessed in the Novitiates, this person said to them, 'My Fathers, if you will permit me, I will tell you the reason of this change. It is owing to the efforts of the lady, against whom, without knowing her, you formerly exclaimed so much. God has made use of her efforts for all this.'

17. "This, added to the favorable influences already existing, could not fail to have a very marked effect. Both the Superior of the Monastery and the Master of the Novitiates, were advanced in years. But these things, combined with what they had personally experienced, had such an effect upon them, that they condescended, with great humility, to submit to such advice and instruction as I was enabled

to give them. It was at this time, and in this city, and for the particular benefit of those whose minds were affected in the manner which I have related, that I wrote the little book, entitled *A Short Method of Prayer*. It seemed to me, under the circumstances of the case, that the spirit of the Lord prompted me to write it. I shall have occasion to say something more of it hereafter.

18. "The persons of whom I am now speaking, followed the directions laid down in that book. They experienced so much benefit from it, that the Superior said to me at a certain time, 'I am become quite a new man. Prayer, which was formerly burdensome to me, and especially after my intellectual faculties became exhausted and dull, I now practise with great pleasure and ease. God, who formerly seemed to be a great way off, is now near; and the communion I have with him, which is frequent, results in great spiritual blessings.'

"The Master of the Novitiates said to me, 'I have been a member of a Monastery or Religious House these forty years, and as such have practised the form of prayer, and perhaps in something of its spirit; but I can truly say, that I have never practised it as I have done since I read that little book. And I can say the same of my other religious exercises.' Among the other persons who became experimentally interested in the subject of religion at this time, were three monks, men of ability and reputation, belonging to another monastery, the members of which were in general very much opposed to me.

19. "God also made me of service to a great number of nuns, of virtuous young women, and even men of the world. Among those who were wrought upon at this time, was a young man of rank, a member of the celebrated Association or Order of the Knights of Malta. Led to understand something of the peaceful nature and effects of religion, he aban-

doned the profession of arms for that of a preacher of the gospel of Christ. He became a man constant in prayer, and was much favored of the Lord. I could not well describe the great number of souls, of whose spiritual good God was pleased to make me the instrument; married women as well as maidens and nuns, monks and preachers, as well as men of the world. Among the number were three curates, one canon, and one grand-vicar, who were more particularly given to me. Generally speaking, those who sought religion did not seek it in vain. There was one priest, however, for whom I was interested, and for whom, in my anxiety for his salvation, I suffered much. He desired religion, while he felt the power of other and inferior attachments. He sought it, but with a divided heart. The contest was severe; and it was with painful emotions that I saw him, after all his desires and efforts, go back again to the world.

"I ought to add, perhaps, that those who were the subjects of this remarkable work, generally remained steadfast in the faith. In the severe trials which followed, some of them were shaken for a time, but returned again. The great body were steadfast — immovable."

20. These things, which commenced soon after her arrival at Grenoble, took place, for the most part, in the spring and summer of 1685. She relates a number of incidents connected with this state of things, some of which may be worth repeating. The following is one. "There was a sister in one of the convents of the city, who for eight years had been in a state of religious melancholy. No one seemed to understand her case; no one was able to give relief. I had never been into that convent; for I was not in the habit of going into such places unless I was sent for, as I did not think it right to intrude, but left myself to be conducted by Providence. Under these circumstances, I was not a little surprised that, near the close of a long summer's day, after

setting of the sun, a message was suddenly sent to me from the Prioress, requesting me to visit the House of which she had the charge. As it was not yet dark, and the convent was not distant, I went. On my way there, I met with one of the sisters belonging to it, who told me the occasion of my being thus suddenly summoned. It was the afflicted and insane state of the poor woman whom I have mentioned. In her sorrow and distraction she had made an attempt to kill herself. Her earnest desire to obtain reconciliation with God, and her deep conviction of the impossibility of securing it by ceremonial observances alone, had produced such a conflict in her mind, that its very foundations were shaken; but not so much so as to deprive her of the power of correct perception for the most part of the time. . . . .

"A person coming in to see her about this time, who had known something of my personal history, advised her to converse with me. Being thus made to understand the general facts of the case, I laid it inwardly before the Lord, who enabled me, as it seemed to me, to understand it more fully. The fact was, that for many years, compelled as it were by the doctrine and discipline which ascribed the highest results to austerities and ceremonial observances, she had struggled against those inward convictions, which assured her that there is a better way. I endeavored to explain to her that this resistance must cease; that she must no longer rely upon her observances, or trust to her personal merits, but must trust in Christ, and resign herself to him alone. God was pleased to bless these efforts. Being a woman of great capacity, she appreciated at once the views which were presented. Submitting herself to God through Christ, and willing to leave all things in his hands in faith, she entered at once into the peace of Paradise. She was so much changed, that she became the admiration of all the members of the Religious Community in which she resided.

God's presence was with her continually; and her spirit and power of prayer were wonderful."

21. But the work did not stop with this individual. A considerable number of persons in the Convent gave attention to the great and beneficent truths which were thus brought before them. It was something new, with those who had practised observances and austerities so long, to hear of reconciliation with God, by the simple and scriptural method of faith in Christ alone. And the announcement, coming though it did from woman's lips, but attended with what gives the true power to every announcement, namely, the *Saviour's blessing*, brought consolation to many a mourning heart. The thorough reformation of one of the inmates in particular, whose ungovernable dispositions had for many years given trouble, attracted great notice. Madame Guyon remarks, that the wonderful change, which was thus wrought through her instrumentality in others, and particularly in this individual, was the means of establishing an intimate friendship between the Prioress and herself.

22. In concluding this chapter, which is chiefly occupied with her religious efforts, it is proper to say, that her labors were not limited, as some might be led to suppose, to the single object of communicating religious instruction. The Christian is required to do good to the bodies, as well as the souls of his fellow men. Taking a wide view of the field of Christian duty, she remembered the poor and the sick. The efforts so happily made at Thonon to establish a hospital for the sick, were followed by similar efforts made at Grenoble. But she has not given us the particulars of this benevolent undertaking; but merely mentions it incidentally, in a subsequent period of her life, in the following terms. "I believe I forgot to say, in the proper place, that the Lord condescended to make use of me to establish a hospital in the city of Grenoble. Some expense was necessarily incur-

red in the beginning; but it was established without what are called permanent or vested funds, on the principle of being supplied by voluntary contributions from the fund of Providence. My enemies afterwards made use of this benevolent effort, as an occasion for speaking ill of me, alleging that I had taken property for the founding of such institutions, which had been settled on my children. This was not true. My children not only fully received what was settled upon them, but shared also in what was assigned to me. And as to the hospitals referred to, instead of ascribing their support to me or any one else, it would be better to say, that they are supported only on the fund of divine providence, which is inexhaustible. But so it has been ordered *for my good*, that all the Lord has enabled me to do for his glory, has ever been turned by man's malignity into trials and crosses for me. Many of my trials I have omitted to particularize, for the reason that the number of them has been so great, that the omission of them has been inevitable."

CHAPTER XXIX.

Origin of the Monastery of the Grand Chartreuse. Visited by Madame Guyon. Description of the approach to it. Conversation between Father Innocentius, the General or Prior of the Carthusians, and Madame Guyon. She meets with opposition at Grenoble. Her method of prayer in her religious Conferences. Commences the writing of Commentaries on the Bible. Of her spiritual state in connection with this work. Remarks on her Commentary on the Canticles. Her sympathy or communion of spirit with King David, when occupied in writing on the Books of Kings. The work entitled The Short Method of Prayer. Circumstances attending the origin of this work. On the writing of books as a means or instrumentality of good. Poetry.

At the distance of eight miles north of Grenoble is the celebrated monastery of the Grand Chartreuse. In the year 1084, Bruno, a native of Cologne, the founder of the Order of Carthusian monks, a man of learning and piety, came to the city of Grenoble, and requested the resident bishop to allow him to establish himself, for religious purposes, in some place of retirement within the limits of his diocese. Hugh, bishop of the city, strongly recommended to him, and the few pious persons with him, as a place suitable to their purposes, the neighboring desert of the Chartreuse, — a place effectually precluded from intrusion by frightful precipices and almost inaccessible rocks. The proposition was readily accepted. Delighted with the prospect of separating themselves from the world, they went into this remarkable retreat;

and removed almost from the possibility of worldly interruptions, they built their places of prayer. Such, many centuries since, was the origin of the monastery of the Grand Chartreuse.

2. The original rule of the monks of Chartreuse did not allow of the visits of women. This rule, I suppose, from some remarks which are to be found in the learned works of Alvan Butler in connection with his account of Bruno, was subsequently relaxed to some extent; — he gives us to understand, that they were excluded in part, namely, from the "inclosure and the church." But however this may be, we find that Madame Guyon, impelled by motives of a religious nature, and in accordance undoubtedly with the existing practice, if not with the original rule, embraced some favorable opportunity to visit this celebrated place. This, to a woman at least, was no small undertaking, although the distance was not great.

As the traveller approaches the Grand Chartreuse, he emerges from a long and gloomy forest, which is abruptly terminated by immense mountains that rise before him. The Pass, through which the ascent of the mountains is commenced, winds through stupendous granite rocks, which overhang from above. At the end of this terrific defile the road is crossed by a romantic mountain torrent, over which is a rude stone bridge. The road no sooner leaves the bridge, than it turns suddenly in another direction, and thus presents at once before the traveller a lofty mountain, on the flattened summit of which the Carthusian monastery is situated, enclosed on either side by other mountain peaks still more elevated, whose tops are whitened with perpetual snows.

3. "No sooner is the defile passed," says a traveller who passed through it a few years before the period of which we are now speaking, "than nothing, which possesses either

animal or vegetable life, is seen. No huntsman winds his horn in these dreary solitudes; no shepherd's pipe is allowed to disturb the deep repose. It is not permitted the mountaineers ever to lead their flocks beyond the entrance of the defile; and even beasts of prey seem to shrink back from that dreaded Pass, and instinctively to keep away from a desert, which neither furnishes subsistence nor covert. Nothing, as we passed upward, met the eye but tremendous precipices and huge fragments of rock, diversified with glaciers in every possible fantastic form.

"Sometimes the rocks, jetting out above, overhung us, till they formed a complete arch over our heads, and rendered the path so dark that we could scarcely see to pick our way. Once we had to pass over a narrow pine plank which shook at every step. This was placed, by way of bridge, over a yawning chasm, which every moment threatened to ingulf the traveller in its marble jaws. We often passed close by the side of abysses so profound as to be totally lost in darkness; while the awful roaring of the waters struggling in their cavities, shook the very rocks on which we trod."*

4. Such are the terms, in which the learned and justly celebrated Port Royalist, Claude Lancelot, speaks of his journey through these sublime rocks and over these rugged ascents and precipices a few years before the same rough road was trodden by the remarkable woman whose life and labors we are narrating. From the bridge at the termination of the defile to the level opening on the top of the mountain where the monastery is situated, the ascent is a little more than two miles. The monastery itself is a very strik-

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* See the Tour to Alet and the Grand Chartreuse, by M. Claude Lancelot, Author of the Port Royal Grammars, with Some Account of the Monastery of La Trappe and of the Institution of Port Royal; edited by Mary Anne Schimmelpennick.

ing object, venerable alike by its massive strength and its high antiquity. Although correctly described as situated on the summit of a mountain, it is nevertheless enclosed on two sides by stupendous rocks and peaks, of still greater height, which reach far above the clouds, and almost shut out the light of the sun. Here dwell a company of monks, about forty in number, under the direction of their General or Prior; they have a large library; many of them are men of extensive information and learning; their duties and austerities are subjected to strict rules; their mode of living is simple; and much of their time is spent in acts of devotion.

5. About a third of a mile below the monastery, in a little opening on the side of the ascent, is a building which may be regarded as an appendage to it, though separate from it in some respects. The principal building at this place, and the cells around it, are occupied by lay brethren and other persons, who wish to be connected with the members of the Chartreuse, and to be under their direction, without wholly conforming to the severity of their rule. It was to this place, probably, and not to the monastery proper, that Madame Guyon ascended through these frightful solitudes. The learned and venerable Prior, Father Innocentius, attended by his monks, came down to meet her. It would be interesting to know, if it were possible, the precise terms of the conversation which passed between them. Of the substance of it, whether we take into view the character of Madame Guyon and the great objects she had before her, or the statements made in the life of Bishop d'Aranthon by Father Innocentius, there can be no doubt. It turned upon the subject — (a subject, as it seems to us, more important than any other which can well be presented to the human mind) — of *religious faith.* She proclaimed to them, not authoritatively or in any way inconsistent with female modesty and propriety, but as the result of a conversation con-

ducted on both sides with Christian kindness and decorum, the indispensable necessity not only of justification by faith, *but of faith as the foundation of the whole inward Christian life.*

6. Christian candor compels us to think favorably of the religious professions and hopes of these good brethren, with whom she conversed under these singular circumstances. But the broad annunciation of faith as the foundation of every thing, a doctrine which excludes all claims of personal merit, we may well suppose, extracted from them, notwithstanding their habits of quietude and silence, marked ejaculations of doubt and astonishment. Many were their ceremonial observances. Eight months of the year, if we may believe their statements, they fasted in the stricter sense of the term; and the rest of the time they ate no meat! Was all this to go for nothing? But it was the doctrine of Faith, in connection with its thoroughly *sanctifying results*, which particularly attracted the notice of the Prior. He was one of those good men, not unknown either in ancient or modern times, whose practical theology, good and desirable as far as it goes, finds its exponent in the seventh chapter of Romans, "when I would do good, *evil is present with me.*" And beyond or above this state, to any thing, which in being love without selfishness, can properly be described as *holiness to the Lord*, he thought it difficult, and even impossible, in opposition to the opinion of Madame Guyon, to arrive in the present life. According to his own statement he came to the conclusion on the spot, that the doctrine of Madame Guyon, whatever might be the defects or virtues of her personal character, was at variance with the received doctrines of the Catholic church, and *heretical.*

7. "Some six or seven years ago," says Father Innocentius, in allusion to this interview, "Madame Guyon left the city of Grenoble, and found her way upward to our solitary

home in the rocks. Although contrary to our usual custom, I thought it an occasion on which I might be excused for conversing with this lady. I took with me, however, a number of the brethren, who might be witnesses of what passed between us. And they will now bear me testimony, that, after the conversation, and when Madame Guyon had left us, I immediately expressed my suspicions, in very strong terms, of the soundness of her views." * It was not long before his suspicions ripened into convictions, and he became one of the leading writers in opposition to her. Thus ended her visit to the Grand Chartreuse. Probably never before nor since have those solitary rocks listened to the voice of woman, coming among them under such circumstances, and announcing to their inmates such salutary truths.

8. It was not long after this visit to the Grand Chartreuse and her return to the city of Grenoble, before she experienced the beginnings of that practical opposition, from which she had suffered in other places. "The lady, who was my particular friend," she says, "began to conceive some jealousy on account of the applause which was given me; God permitted that she should be thus tempted and afflicted, in order that she might know herself, and become more thoroughly purified. Also some of those persons who sustained the office of Confessors in the church, began to be uneasy, saying, that I had gone out of my place, and that it was not my proper business to aid in this manner, in the instruction and restoration of souls.

"It was easy for me," she adds, "to see the difference between those Confessors, who, in the conducting of souls, seek nothing but God's glory, and those other Confessors, who

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* La Vie de Messire Jean D'Aranthon D'Alex, Liv. 3d, ch. 4th.—This work was published anonymously, but the author of it was Father Innocentius himself.

make the discharge of their office subservient to their own personal interests. Those of the first class came to see me, and approved of my labors, and greatly rejoiced in the grace of God, which was bestowed on their penitents. The others, on the contrary, seemed to despise the good, because they contemned the instrument of it; and tried in a secret manner to excite the town against me. I saw that they would be right in opposing me, if I had sought my own interests and had obtruded upon them of myself. But it was otherwise, when I had merely followed the leadings of divine Providence, and had done only what God required me to do."

9. The appearance of an opposition, at first comparatively feeble, but continually increasing in violence, did not compel her immediately to remit her labors. She still continued her little assemblies for conversation and prayer. Perhaps it may be proper, before leaving this account of her labors, to refer a moment to what I suppose to have been her mode of proceeding in one respect. In this remark I have particular reference to her method of prayer. She conversed much, but not without supplication mingled with it. When persons were collected together, before entering upon conversation, and from time to time when especial divine communion seemed to be necessary, it was her practice to pray *in silence.* Such had been her devotional habits, that she entered into this state in a remarkable manner. In a moment she recollected herself in God. The mind turned inward upon itself. Her closed or uplifted eye, her hands clasped together, her serene countenance abstracted from worldly influences but lighted up with a divine ray, left the conviction upon those who were present with her and beheld her, that her soul was in a communion with the Eternal Mind, too deep for the utterance of words. Such a conviction could hardly fail to react upon themselves, to check the current of

their worldly affections and to produce the most salutary religious impressions.

10. The Holy Ghost has a language *outward*, as well as inward. *Within*, it gives holy dispositions; *without*, it shows itself in the natural signs and expressions of peace, love, forbearance, purity, desire for the good of others; all elevated and sanctified by that holy confidence, which results from the knowledge of God's unchangeable friendship. A countenance, purified and irradiated by the divine power of this inward illumination, necessarily has something in it which is more angelic than human.

> "There is a light around her brow,
> A holiness in those calm eyes;
> Which show, though earth may claim it now,
> Her spirit's home is in the skies."

Before the divine glance of that eye, before the illuminated expression of that peaceful countenance, jealousy, and pride, and malice, and impurity, and revenge, and selfishness, and every evil thing, stand rebuked and condemned.

11. In a preceding chapter we have stated the circumstances under which Madame Guyon commenced the works, which were afterwards published under her name. At Thonon, she wrote the Spiritual Torrents. At Grenoble, her present place of residence, she commenced her Commentaries on the Bible. These commentaries are, for the most part, experimental and practical. A critical and exegetical commentary cannot be written to much purpose, without a knowledge of the Hebrew language and of other dialects which are related to it in origin. To this knowledge she made no pretensions; though, having some knowledge of the Latin she was able to avail herself of some important helps in that language, as well as of commentaries in French and Italian.

Her method, for the most part, was this. She placed the Bible before her, and studied it, it would seem, both in the Latin and French translations, with the simple object of ascertaining, in the first place, what meaning it would present to a mind, humbly and honestly directing itself to the pursuit of the truth. In addition to this, she adopted the idea, and, as there is reason to think, very correctly, not only that the Old and New Testaments are parts of one system, but that the import of the one can, in many cases, best be reached and understood by a comparison of the related topics and passages of the other. And accordingly she studied them together, and interpreted the one by the other; obtaining, as she supposed, a better knowledge of both by her intimate knowledge of each of them separately. But this was not all. The Holy Scriptures are full of truths which cannot well be received and appreciated, except in connection with an inward experience corresponding to them. Not unfrequently the light of the mind, inspired by the inward agency of the spirit of truth, throws light upon the outward letter. If Madame Guyon had less of that form of exegetical knowledge, which is derived from an access to the original tongues of the Scriptures, than some others, she had more, much more, of that inward, spiritual insight, which, to say the least, is equally valuable. It is this inward power of interpretation, to which she refers, when she says, "I wrote my commentaries on the Scriptures, for the most part, in the night; in time that was taken from sleep. The Lord was so present to me in this work, and kept me so under control, that I both began and left off writing just as he was pleased to order it; writing when He gave me inward light and strength, and stopping when He withheld them. I wrote with very great rapidity, light being diffused within me in such a manner, that I found I had in myself latent treasures of perception and knowledge, of which I had but little previous conception."

12. She seems in this to have been an illustration and proof of the scriptural declaration, that those who do the will of God, shall know of the doctrine, whether it be true.* God taught her just so far as she was his. "Didst not Thou, O my God," she says in speaking on this subject, "turn me an hundred ways to prove *whether I was thine without any reserve ;* — to discover by the trials, which Thou didst continually make me pass through, whether I had not yet some little interest for myself? My soul, under the influence of the discipline to which it was subjected, became exceedingly pliable to every discovery of the divine will. I was enabled to receive humiliations in the same spirit in which I received favors; so much so that every thing, high and low, was rendered alike to me;" meaning in these remarks to imply, — which is very obvious from the connection in which they are found, — that it is a mind in this state, more than in any other, which God illumines.

13. "I have sometimes thought," she remarks farther in the same connection, "that the Lord deals with his friends who are dearest to him, as the ocean does with its waves. Sometimes it pushes them against the rocks, where they break in pieces, sometimes it rolls them on the sand, or dashes them on the mire. And then, in a moment, it retakes them into the depths of its own bosom, where they are absorbed with the same rapidity with which they were first ejected. The more violently they are dashed upon the rocks, the more quickly and impetuously do they return to the great centre. With others he deals more gently. There are many, far the greater number, whom he permits to live by consolations mingled with faith. How few are those, how very rare, who are driven and dashed where the Lord

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* John vii. 17.

pleases, till their wills are wholly destroyed, and they can no longer demand any thing for themselves."

14. It was in this state of mind, in which she had thus given herself to God without reserve, that she commenced her Commentaries on the Bible. They have all been published; those on the Old Testament in twelve small octavo volumes, and those on the New Testament in eight. A part only were written at Grenoble. Of these volumes, the most remarkable, that at least which has attracted the most attention, is the work on the Canticles or Solomon's Song. Taking the view which has been adopted by the greater number of the earlier critics, Madame Guyon regards this remarkable poem, taken in its higher or spiritual sense, as a conversation between the truly sanctified soul and Christ. In the concluding part of her commentary, she brings out very fully her views of the union of the soul with Christ, and with God through Christ, which she regards as one of the highest, perhaps the very highest result of sanctification. It was probably this circumstance, namely, that this work indicated so distinctly and fully, and I think I may say *eloquently*, the doctrine of a heart wholly delivered, if not from every thing which requires penitent humiliation and the application of Christ's blood, yet delivered at least from all *known* voluntary sin and thus made one with Christ in love, as a doctrine to be taught, believed, and realized, which made her commentary on the Canticles the subject, not only of special attention, but of special criticism and rebuke.

15. There is one passage, illustrative of the operations of her mind in the preparation of her commentaries, which it may be proper to repeat here. "In writing my commentaries on the Books of Kings, when I gave attention to those parts which had relation to king David, I felt a very remarkable communion of spirit with him, as much so almost as if he had been present with me. Even before I had commenced

writing, in my previous and preparatory contemplations, I had experienced this union. By a remarkable operation upon me, I seemed to comprehend very fully the greatness of his grace, the conduct of God over him, and all the circumstances of the states through which he had passed. In his capacity of leader and pastor of Israel, I was deeply impressed with a view of him, as a striking type of Christ. The Saviour and his people are one. And it seemed to be nothing less than that pure and holy union, which I had previously experienced in connection with the Saviour, which now extended itself to the king of Israel, his antitype, and embraced him and also other saints. It was in the experience of this intimate union with Christ and with those who are like him, that my words, whether written or spoken, had a wonderful effect, with God's blessing, in forming Christ in the souls of others, and in bringing them into the same state of union."

16. "Here I may add," she says further, "to what I have already remarked about my writings, that a considerable part of my comments on the book of Judges happened by some means to be lost. Being desired by some of my friends to render the book complete in that part which was wanting, I wrote over again the places which were missing. Afterwards when the people of the house where I had resided were about leaving it for some reason, the papers, which had been mislaid there, were found. My former and latter explications were found on comparison to be conformable to each other with scarcely any variation, which greatly surprised persons of knowledge and merit, who examined them."

From the connection, in which this statement is introduced, we are led to infer, that she regarded the sameness of the two explications as resulting from a sameness in that inward and divine operation, which alone gives the true light. The Lord guided her.

17. It was here also, as we have already had occasion to say, that she wrote her little book, entitled, *A Short Method of Prayer.* She makes the following statement in regard to the publication of this book, which may be of some interest to the reader. "Among my intimate friends in the city of Grenoble was a civilian, a counsellor of the Parliament of Grenoble. He was a religious man; so much so, that he might be described as a pattern or model of piety. He came into my room one day, and seeing on my table my manuscript treatise on Prayer, he desired me to lend it to him. To this request I acceded. He read it, and being much pleased with it, he lent it to some of his friends, to whom he thought it might be of service. Others wanted copies of it. He resolved, therefore, to have it printed. The printing was begun and completed. The proper ecclesiastical permissions and approbations were obtained. I was requested to write a Preface, which I did.

"It was under these circumstances, that this book, which has already, within a few years, passed through five or six editions, was given to the world. The Lord has given a great blessing to this little treatise; but it has caused great excitement among those who did not accede to its principles, and has been the pretence of various trials and persecutions which I have endured."

18. Books are God's instruments of good, as well as sermons. He, who cannot preach, may talk; and he, who cannot do either, may perhaps write. A good book, laid conscientiously upon God's altar, is no small thing. How abundant is the evidence of this. It is certainly unnecessary to say, that Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion, Baxter's Saint's Rest, the Imitation of Christ by Kempis, and many other works which might be mentioned, have exerted a wide influence of the most salutary kind; an influence felt in every part of the world, and perpetuated from

generation to generation. Madame Guyon did not write for fame. She placed her books, as she placed herself, upon God's altar in *pure love*. The spirit of sacrifice, which she so beautifully describes in one of her poems, was in every thing.

I place an offering at thy shrine,
  From taint and blemish clear,
Simple and pure in its design,
  Of all that I hold dear.

I yield Thee back thy gifts again,
  Thy gifts which most I prize;
Desirous only to retain
  The notice of thine eyes.

But, if by thine adored decree,
  That blessing be denied,
Resigned, and unreluctant, see
  My every wish subside.

Thy will in all things I approve,
  Exalted or cast down; —
Thy will in every state I love,
  And even in thy frown.

CHAPTER XXX.

Analysis of the work entitled The Method of Prayer. Sense in which the word Prayer is used by Madame Guyon in this work. Those who are without the spirit of prayer; in other words those who are without religion, are invited to seek it. Directions to aid persons, even those who are most ignorant, in seeking it. Additional directions. Directions applicable to persons of some degree of knowledge and education. Of an increased or higher degree of religious experience. Of abandonment or entire consecration to God in all things. Of the test or trial of consecration. Inward holiness the true regulator of the outward life. Of gradual growth or advancement in the religious life. Of the knowledge of our inward sins, when souls are in this advanced state. Of the manner in which we are to meet and resist temptations. Of the soul in the state of pure or unselfish love. Of the practice of the prayer of silence. Of the true relation of human and divine activity. Of the nature and conditions of the state of divine union. Appeal to religious pastors and teachers.

As the work, the origin of which was explained near the close of the last chapter, is frequently referred to in connection with the personal history of Madame Guyon, and was considered so important as to be made the subject of ecclesiastical condemnation and interdiction, I think it proper to give a concise analysis of it in the present chapter.

1. *Remarks in explanation of the use of the term Prayer.* "St. Paul, in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, v. 17, has enjoined upon us *to pray without ceasing.*" Our Saviour,

in the Gospel of St. Mark, xiii. 33, requires us "*to take heed, to watch, and to pray.*" But what is that prayer, which all are thus required to practise, and which is to be practised *without cessation?* It is obviously something more than the formal offering up of specific requests or petitions. I wish the reader to notice, that I use the term prayer in a more general sense than this. The prayer of which I speak, is that *state of the heart in which it is united to God in faith and love.* The heart that has faith and love, is the true praying heart.

A man who has this heart, may pray at all times. Outward employments do not obstruct this prayer. It is not a prayer of the understanding alone, which is so limited in its operations that it can have but one specific object, and which implies and requires comparison and effort. It is the natural, the spontaneous flowing out of the heart, in the issues of its own moral and religious life. So that it may be practised under all circumstances by those who are in the possession and in the spirit of it. Kings, prelates, priests, magistrates, soldiers, tradesmen, laborers, all classes of persons, in all ages and in all situations, may pray. If they have the spirit of prayer, how can they help praying? If they have the principles of love and faith in them, they have that in them, which, naturally, and by its own law of action, is appropriate to all times and occasions.

Prayer, then, using the term in the more general sense, and *religion* are the same thing. I propose, then, in the following treatise, to teach persons, by methods which seem to me to be simple and easy, to become religious.

2. *All who are without the spirit of prayer, in other words, all who are without religion, are invited to seek it.*

Come, ye famishing souls, who find nought whereon to feed, come, and ye shall be satisfied! Come, ye poor afflicted ones, who groan beneath your load of wretchedness and pain, and ye shall find ease and comfort! Come, ye sick, to your physician, and be not fearful of approaching him, because ye are filled with diseases. Expose them to his view, and they shall be healed! Children, draw near to your Father, and he will embrace you in the arms of love. Come, ye poor, wandering sheep, return to your Shepherd! Come, sinners, to your Saviour! Let all, without exception, come; for Jesus Christ hath called all. Yet, let not those come who are without a heart; those who are without a heart are not asked; for there must be a heart, in the natural sense of the term at least, in order that there may be LOVE. But of whom can it be said, that he is really without a heart? Oh, come, then, *and give this heart to God*, and here, in following these simple directions, aided by the Holy Ghost, learn how to make the donation!

3. *Directions to a person very ignorant and without religion in respect to the manner in which he may properly seek it.*

Let me begin then with one who has not the spirit of prayer, and consequently has not religion. And I will take, in the first place, one who is very ignorant. Let him stand for a class of persons. I will suppose that they hardly know anything or are hardly capable of knowing anything, *except the Lord's Prayer.* And this is my direction: let them begin with what they are supposed to know, namely, the Lord's Prayer. Let them say, OUR FATHER, and stop there; remaining in respectful silence and meditation; pondering a little upon the meaning of the words, and especially upon the infinite willingness of God to become *their* Father. And before they go further, let them utter the petition, that He may become to them individually what He is so willing to be.

I will not go through with all the petitions of the prayer, though it is very short, but will take enough to illustrate what I mean. Let them proceed, then, to the petition, THY

KINGDOM COME. And delaying upon this as before, until they can imbibe its *spirit*, which is one of the most important things in this process, let them apply the petition, as in the preceding instance, to *themselves;* beseeching this King of glory to reign in them, and endeavoring with divine assistance, to yield to Him the just claim he has over them, and to resign themselves wholly to his divine government. If, in delaying upon this petition, they find their minds peaceful and acquiescent, let them, in connection with this encouraging state of mind, dwell upon the petition a little longer than usual.

Then let them take another petition; — THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS DONE IN HEAVEN. And here let these poor ignorant seekers after religion humble themselves before God in their weakness and ignorance, and earnestly supplicate, that God's will, his *whole* will, may be accomplished in their hearts, *in* them and *by* them forever. And knowing that God's will is accomplished in us when we love him, it is the same thing if they should pray God to enable them to love him with all their heart. And in doing this, however sinful and unworthy they may be, let them be calm and peaceable; not disturbed and agitated, as if there were no Saviour, no Divine Shepherd, who is the daily nourishment of his people, and feeds his flock, as it were, with *himself;* not fearful and distrustful, as if God were not merciful or might not be true to his promises, when he pledges forgiveness for Christ's sake. But on the contrary, BELIEVE.

4. *Additional directions for those who are beginning to seek religion.*

Two or three remarks additional are to be made here. The first is, that these persons are not to overburden themselves with frequent repetitions of set forms of prayer, such as are often prescribed. Our Saviour says, *When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think* *they shall be heard for their much speaking.* Begin with the Lord's prayer as the simplest and best. Go over it slowly, calmly, believingly; not being in a hurry to go over the whole and then to *repeat* it, as if the result depended on the *repetition*, and the number of repetitions; but delaying upon each petition, till you begin to feel the power of it in your heart.

A second remark is, that you are to place God before you as the being to whom you are to be reconciled, and from whom you are to receive all good. But be careful not to form *any image of the Deity.* The idea of God, whatever may be sometimes thought, can never be represented and set forth by anything which the eye beholds or the hand touches, by anything which exists in sculpture and painting. "*God is a spirit,*" says the Saviour, "*and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.*" It is enough, if we have a general idea of God, such as any one may form, but without specific form or image; and place ourselves in his presence by a lively faith.

A third remark is this. When you say, *Our Father;* or say, *Thy will be done*, or say, *Forgive us our Trespasses;* do not forget Him, who is the way, the truth, and the life, the Saviour, the second person in the ever blessed Trinity. He is the *way.* Enter to God *through* Him. Behold him in the various states of his Incarnation. You are a man, with all of man's feebleness and temptations; — behold him assuming humanity in order that he may sympathize with you. You are a sinner; — behold him upon the cross, dying that you might live. In the Lord's prayer God offers himself to you. Uttering that prayer in Christ, who is the mediatorial way, you receive God; and in receiving Him, you receive the true and everlasting life.

Persevere in this way, but without violence or perturbation; asking for few things and such as are very essential, which are found in the Lord's Prayer; pausing for some time upon each supplication with a calm and silent looking up to God through Christ; ceasing as much as possible from your own exertion and strength in order that you may find strength in the Saviour by faith; and thus, with God's blessing, which is promised to all who seek Him in this way, you will find the beginnings of a true and spiritual existence.

5. *Directions, additional to those already given, applicable to persons of some degree of knowledge and education.*

The poor and the ignorant have the gospel preached to them. In what I have said, the most ignorant man will find important directions easily applicable to himself. There are those, who have more knowledge, men of reading, who may very properly avail themselves of their intellectual position, in furthering this great object. The directions which have already been given, are exceedingly important to them, as well as to others. But in addition to the use of the Lord's prayer, which has been mentioned, let them read books on *experimental* religion, such as are most decidedly so; reading them, however, in the manner which has been mentioned; delaying upon the most important truths, pondering upon them and praying over them, till the power which is in them, being made alive by the Holy Ghost, is felt in the heart.

Meditation also, considered as distinct from reading, is to be practised on similar principles. We will suppose that God in his providence gives you a season of retirement, that He permits you to be alone; and under such circumstances that you have an opportunity of silently and calmly recalling great moral and religious principles. At such times endeavor, by a lively act of faith, to realize the relations in which you stand to God, and to place yourself, as it were, in his immediate presence. In general, this is the first great thought, upon which the mind should be occupied; — God is

God is *present;* God is our *Father;* to Him we *owe all.* Let the mind repose calmly and believingly upon these great truths, in the manner which has already been mentioned, until their power begins to be felt inwardly. And the same with other important religious truths, in which there is substance and food for the inquiring mind, such as our lost condition by nature, Christ our Mediator, God the inward Teacher of men in the person of the Holy Ghost. Upon all such leading truths, applicable to your present needy situation, dwell quietly and humbly, with the senses and thoughts recollected and withdrawn from the circumference to the centre. Thus wait upon the Lord with strong desire, but without agitation. Such truths are the appropriate food of the mind, in its inquiries after God. When the soul, by dwelling calmly and patiently upon them, aided by God's blessing, begins to taste them, — that is to say, begins to understand them, to apply them, and to feel them, — then we have reason to think, that there is a *beginning,* small though it may be, *of a new life.*

6. *Of an increased or higher degree of religious experience.*

That, which was but little in its beginning, soon becomes greater. The soul has, at first, but a little *realizing* sense of God. It says, *my* Father, it is true, but says it very *tremblingly.* But after a time, and perhaps very soon, it gains strength. It begins to see, more and more distinctly, how God, whom as a sinner it feared, can be fully reconciled. It believes more fully in God, because it believes more fully in Christ, who is the only way of access. In the language of the Canticles, the name of Christ becomes "*as ointment poured forth.*"

In this advanced state the soul begins to recognize the great truth, that our love to God should be without selfishness, and that our will should be perfectly united in his will.

The servant, who only proportions his diligence to the hope of *reward*, renders himself unworthy of all reward. We must learn to seek God in distinction from his gifts, and God is in his WILL. Supposing, then, that God should smite you with afflictions without, and with temptations within, and should leave the soul, so far as consolations are concerned, in a state of entire aridity, what course would it be proper to take? In answer I would say, — Do what God requires you to do, and suffer what He requires you to suffer; but in everything be resigned and patient! With humility of spirit, with a sense of your own nothingness, with the reiterated breathings of an ardent but peaceful affection, and with inward submission and quietness full of the most profound respect, you must wait the return of the Beloved. In this way you will demonstrate, that *it is God himself alone* and his good pleasure which you seek, and *not the selfish delights of your own sensations.*

7. *Of abandonment or entire consecration to God in all things.*

But this cannot well be done without the principle of *abandonment;* by which I mean that act in which we resign, abandon, or consecrate ourselves entirely to God. To abandon ourselves or to consecrate ourselves to God is to leave ourselves entirely in his hands. Those, who are consecrated, have given their own wills into the keeping of God's will. They renounce every particular inclination as soon as it arises, however good it may appear, and however good it may really be in itself considered, in order that they may stand in perfect indifference with respect to themselves, and only desire, choose, and will that which God himself wills. Such a soul is resigned in all things, whether for soul or body, whether for time or eternity; by leaving what is past in oblivion; by leaving what is to come to the decisions of Providence; and by devoting to God, without any reserve, the *present moment;* — a moment which necessarily brings with it God's eternal order of things, and in everything, excepting sin, is a declaration to us of his will as certain and infallible, as it is inevitable and common to us all.

Abandonment or entire consecration, cannot exist without strong faith. None can do this, but those who *believe.*

8. *Of the test or trial of consecration.*

Our abandonment or entire consecration to God is a matter of so much consequence, that God will not fail to give us opportunities to try or test, whether it be a true one or not. No man can be wholly the Lord's, unless he is wholly consecrated to the Lord; and no man can know, whether he is thus wholly consecrated, except by *tribulation.* That is the test. To rejoice in God's will, when that will imparts nothing but happiness, is easy even for the natural man. But none but the renovated man, none but the religious man, can rejoice in the divine will, when it crosses his path, disappoints his expectations, and overwhelms him with sorrow. Trial, therefore, instead of being shunned, should be welcomed as the test, and the only true test, of a true state.

Beloved souls! There are consolations, which pass away; but ye will not find true and abiding consolation except in entire abandonment, and in that love which loves the *cross.* He, who does not welcome the cross, does not welcome God.

9. *Inward holiness the true regulator of the outward life.*

When we have the true life *within,* we may reasonably be expected to have the true life, that is to say, the truly regulated life *without.* "LOVE," says St. Augustine, "*and do what you please.*" If we have that love, which God never fails to give to those who abandon themselves entirely to him, a love without selfishness, it will not fail to work itself out in appropriate and right issues. The inordinate action of the senses arises obviously from the errors and perversions of the inward state. The eye is wrong in its exercise, because the heart, which directs it, is wrong. And the same may be said of the other senses. The touch is wrong, the taste is wrong, *all* are wrong, because the soul, which is the basis or foundation of their activity, is wrong. When we mortify the soul in its wrong action, and establish it in a right action, an action which has the love of God's will for its life, we necessarily subdue and regulate the outward conduct generally. Mortify the inward man; and you can hardly fail to mortify and regulate the outward man.

[The directions in this part of her work seem designed, and were so understood by the opposers of Madame Guyon, to check and to reprove the tendencies of the Catholic Church at that time, to place religion, which can really have its seat nowhere else than in the heart, in outward observances and austerities.]

10. *Of gradual growth or advancement in the religious life.*

The soul, that is fully given up in faith and love, is astonished to find God gradually taking possession of its whole being. One of the evidences of growth in grace is a tendency to cease from ourselves, in order that God himself, in the operation of the Holy Ghost, may exist and act in us. In saying that the tendency of the soul is to cease from self, it is not meant, that the tendency of the soul is *to be inactive*, in the absolute sense of the terms, but only to cease from *self-originated* action. In growing in grace, it becomes more and more coöperative with *God*, as the principle and strength of its movement. The moment we are in this state of mind, and are disposed to cease from action in order that God may act in us, we shall always find divine grace richly imparted.

This state of the soul is the true spiritual *preparative* for the various forms of duty; namely, a state of the soul, in which the soul is in harmony with itself, because it is in harmony with God; in which it is at rest in itself, because it has rest in God. A soul in this state is *prepared* for all times, places, and occasions; prepared for the intercourse of society, prepared for the seasons and duties of worship, prepared for outward and effective action. Cease, therefore, from the action of self, in order that the soul may rest continually upon the Great Centre. When, through weakness of purpose or want of faith, we become, as it were, *uncentred*, it is of immediate importance to turn again gently and sweetly inward; and thus bring the soul into harmony with the desires and purposes of God. The more we are in this state, the more we shall be likely to be; that is to say, the more we exercise love and trust in God, the more we shall be likely to exercise them. The powerful law of HABIT, which is continually in exercise, gives new strength day by day. And this is not all. The more the soul becomes like God, the more clearly it discerns God's excellences; and the more distinctly and fully it feels his attracting power.

11. *Of a knowledge of our inward sins when souls are in this advanced state.*

When souls have attained to this degree of religious experience, no fault escapes reprehension. If a soul, in this intimate nearness with God, should be left to fall into any error or sin, it would be immediately thrown into the greatest confusion and inward condemnation. God, being placed in the centre, and giving increased strength to the scrutinizing power of conscience, will suffer no such evils to be concealed. God becomes the incessant examiner of the soul; but still in such a way that the soul, moving in the divine light, can see and examine for itself. And if the soul be faithful in its entire resignation to God, it will discover that it is a thousand times more effectually inspected by an examination conducted in this divine light, than by the most vigorous scrutiny carried on in its own strength. The soul, which thus places God in the centre, hates sin as God hates it.

When we fall into errors, and even into undoubted sins, the rules of inward holy living require us not to vex and disquiet ourselves; but simply in deep humiliation and penitence, to turn calmly and believingly, without fear and without agitation, to Him who forgives willingly, to that cross of Christ, where it can be truly said, that wounded souls are healed. Great agitation and vexation of mind are not necessarily *penitence* nor the result of penitence, but are rather the result of *unbelief*.

12. *Of the manner in which we are to meet and resist temptations.*

Perhaps no period of the religious life, even that in which the soul is the most advanced, is free from temptation. The Saviour himself was tempted. Temptations may be met and resisted in two ways. One way is to give them our whole attention; to meet and resist them in a *direct contest.* But such are the laws of the mind, that when we meet the temptation in this way, we necessarily withdraw the soul from that entire sympathy and union with God, which should ever be its principal occupation.

The other method is, to turn away the mind from the contemplation of the evil in its outward form, and to keep it fixed, if possible, still more closely and watchfully upon God. A little child on perceiving a monster, does not wait to fight with it, and will scarcely turn its eyes toward it; but quickly shrinks into the bosom of its mother, in entire confidence of safety; so likewise should the soul turn from the dangers of temptation to her God. "God is in the midst of her," saith the Psalmist, "she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." Psal. xlvi. 5.

If we do otherwise, and in our weakness attempt to attack our enemies, we shall frequently feel ourselves wounded, if not totally defeated; but, by casting ourselves into the simple presence of God, in the exercise of faith, we shall find instant supplies of strength for our support. This was the succor sought for by David. "I have set," saith he, "the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; — my flesh also shall rest in hope." Psal. xvi. 8, 9. And it is said in Exodus, "The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."

13. *Of the soul in the state of pure or unselfish love.*

When we have given ourselves to God in *abandonment*, or the act of entire and unreserved consecration, and have exercised faith in God that he does *now*, and that he will ever, so long as we are thus wholly given to him, receive us and make us one with himself, then God becomes central in the soul, and all which is the opposite of God, gradually *dissolves itself*, if one may so speak, and passes away. A new odor may be said to issue from the spirit. Hence it is that in the Canticles, the Beloved, who represents the Saviour, says of his Spouse, who represents the Church, when he saw her soul melting with affection as he spoke to her, "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness, like pillars of smoke, *perfumed with myrrh and frankincense?*"

Self is now destroyed. The soul, recognizing God as its centre, is filled with a love, which, as it places God first, and every thing else in the proper relation to him, may be regarded as *pure*. It is not until we arrive at this state, in the entire destruction and loss of self, that we acknowledge, in the highest and truest sense, God's supreme existence; still less *do* we, or *can* we, have God *as a life within us*. But from this time the soul ascribes to God all blessing, power, honor, and glory for ever; and worships Him "in *spirit and in truth.*"

In experimental religion there are two great and important views, perhaps there are none more important, which are expressed by the single terms, the ALL and the NOTHING. We must become *Nothing* in ourselves, before we can receive the *All* or *Fulness* of God. We can pay due homage to the ALL of God, only in our own annihilation; which is no sooner accomplished, than He, who never suffers a void in nature, instantly fills us with himself. God finds us *where we lose ourselves.* And when he finds us in this position, he finds us, not to despise and reject us, but to come into the heart which is now made empty and clean for his reception, and to set *up his kingdom there forever.*

14. *Of the practice of the prayer of silence.*

When the soul has reached this degree of experience, it is disposed to practise what may be termed the PRAYER OF SILENCE. A prayer which is so called, not merely because it excludes the use of the voice, which is one form of silent prayer, but because it has so simplified and consolidated its petitions, which were formerly much multiplied in variety and number, that it has hardly anything to say, except to breathe forth, in a desire UNSPOKEN, — *Thy will be done.* This prayer so simple, and yet so comprehensive, may be said to embody the whole state of the soul. He who utters this prayer, utters *all prayer;* because he repeats and reflects, as it were, in himself, the whole disposition and desire of the Infinite Mind. And believing that this prayer is and must be fulfilled *moment by moment*, the constant fruition crowns the constant request, and it rejoices in what it *has*, as well as in what it *seeks.*

Some persons, when they hear of the prayer of silence, falsely imagine, that the soul remains stupid, dead, and inactive; but there is no doubt that, in this divine prayer, (which, perhaps it should be said, exists only on its appropriate occasions, and does not exclude other forms of prayer,) it acts more nobly and more extensively than it had ever done before; since God himself is its mover, and it now acts as it is acted upon by the agency of the Holy Ghost. When St. Paul speaks of our being led by the Spirit of God, it is not meant that we should cease from action; but that our action should be in harmony with and in subordination to the divine action. This is finely represented by the prophet Ezekiel's vision of the wheels, which had a living spirit; and whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went; they ascended and descended as they were moved; for the spirit of life was in them, and they returned not when they went.

Instead, then, of promoting idleness, we promote the highest activity, by inculcating *a total dependence on the Spirit of God as our moving principle;* for it is in Him, and by Him alone, that 'we live and move and have our being.' This meek dependence on the Spirit of God, which makes the will of God the only rule of action, is indispensably necessary to reinstate the soul in its primeval unity and simplicity; and to illuminate it with the light of that "single eye," of which the Scriptures so emphatically speak.

15. *Of the true relation of human and divine activity.*

In the early periods of his Christian experience man is required to labor much, strive much, act much. But with what object? Obviously the aim and object are to conquer himself, to smite and annul his own selfishness, to restrain and regulate his own multiplied and unholy activity, in order that he may be rendered submissive and quiet before God, and thus be made susceptible of the divine impressions and the divine leading. While the tablet is unsteady, it is obvious that the painter is unable to delineate a true copy.

It is thus in the inward life. Every act of our own unsubdued and selfish spirit, even while God is operating upon it, is productive of false and erroneous lineaments. It is a movement out of the true direction; it necessarily confuses the work, and tends to defeat the design of this adorable painter; and accordingly our own activity, when properly directed, results in a cessation of activity, so far as this, that we cease from selfish action and remain in peace; and permitting God to inscribe upon us just as he pleases, the signatures of his own will, we move only when He moves us.

And such action, coöperating with the divine movement, is incontestably more noble than any other. "If any man be in Christ," says the Apostle Paul, "he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." But this state of things can be made to exist only by our dying to ourselves and to all our own activity, except so far as it is kept in *subordination to divine grace*, in order that the activity of God may be substituted in its stead. Instead, therefore, of prohibiting activity, we enjoin it; but we enjoin it in absolute dependence on the Spirit of God; so that the divine activity, considered as antecedent in action, and as giving authority to action, may take the place of the human. "Jesus Christ," we are told, "hath the life in himself;" and nothing but the grace, which flows through Him is, or can be, the moral and religious life of his people.

16. *Of the nature and conditions of the state of divine union, or union with God.*

The result of all religion is to bring us into union with God; being made one with him in understanding, one in affections, and one in will. We are made one in understanding, when by renouncing our own wisdom, we seek continually and believingly for wisdom from on high. We are made one in affection, when we desire and love what he desires and loves. We are made one in will, when our purposes are as his are.

God is LOVE. It is the very essence of his being to desire the happiness, and to rejoice in the happiness of all created things. He is not indifferent, and from his very nature, he cannot be indifferent to the well-being of the smallest insect, that floats in the air; much less to that of beings higher in capacity, and higher in moral nature. No claims of selfishness and no influences of passion can pervert or diminish, in any degree, this pure and perfect love. And all beings who do not reflect the image of God in this respect, all beings whose love is not free from all intermixture of selfishness, are necessarily in a greater or less degree, discordant with him. One of the leading and most important conditions, therefore, of perfect moral union with God, is a heart free from selfishness; in other words, the possession of a state of heart, which may properly be denominated that of pure or perfect love. God's bright heart of love can no more mingle with man's selfish heart, so long as it remains selfish, than the rays of the sun can mingle and become one with the dust and mud upon which they shine.

Again, the will of God, with which the human will must harmonize, is invariable in its position. It is an obvious remark, that the divine WILL never varies, and never can vary, from the line of perfect rectitude on the one hand, and of perfect love on the other. It always and invariably moves in the line of the highest love, regulated by the highest justice. This is the law of its movement, unchangeable as the divine existence. The divine will, therefore, without ceasing to be active, is in perfect repose; always moving in *simplicity*, in other words, always moving under the light of what the Scriptures call a *single eye*, that is to say, under the guidance of the single motive of holy love; always bringing to pass quietly, but certainly, its purposes at the appointed time.

We proceed to remark, therefore, that there can be no true moral union between God and man, until the human will is brought into harmony with the divine. And the human will can never move in the line of the divine will, unless it moves under the law of pure or perfect love. When it moves in this way, it has not and cannot have, any contest with God. When it moves in this way, it moves not out of the divine will, but IN it, and accomplishes just what God would have it accomplish.

And this life of union, which is the highest and most glorious result of our being, is the gift of God. A fundamental condition of it is, that we shall resign ourselves to Him, that we may be his in all things, and that we may receive this, and all other blessings at his hand. God alone can accomplish it. Still, the creature must give up his opposition, and *consent* to have it done. God loves his creatures; God is the source of light to them; God in Christ is the true Saviour. But man must, at least, recognize his alienation, and in becoming willing and desirous to be saved, must expand his soul to the divine operation. The creature, therefore, must open the window; it is the least he can do; but it is the sun himself, the Eternal Sun, that must give the light.

When the soul is in this position, in harmony with God, and receiving all from God, it then becomes all that it is possible for it to be in the present life, and may be designated as a sanctified or holy soul; a soul that can be said to be in the purity or perfection of love, although that love is susceptible of an increased intensity in degree; a soul which has entered into that true stillness, originating in the virtual fulfilment, in connection with the principle of *faith*, of all its desires as they arise, which gave its harmony and beauty to the divinely resigned and peaceful character of Christ.

17. *Of false pretensions to a state of sanctification and divine union.*

Behold a holy soul! But some will say, that persons may feign this state and pretend that they are in it, who do not possess it; and thus deception may be practised, injurious to themselves and to others. I answer that a person may just as well feign this state and no more, as the poor suffering man, who is on the point of perishing with hunger, can for a length of time feign to be full and satisfied. *There he is*, no matter what his pretensions may be; his looks, his countenance, show his condition. Some wish or word, some sigh, or some other sign will inevitably escape him, and betray his famished state. Men may *pretend* to be wholly the Lord's, by harmony of affection and will, and by being in entire moral union with Him; but *if they are not so*, there will certainly be something in look, in word, or in action, which will show it.

18. *Remarks on the character of this work.*

In giving the preceding Analysis we have not undertaken to follow precisely the language of the original, but have given what we supposed to be the idea or thought, with some slight variations of the original arrangement, such as seemed to improve the logical and religious relation of the parts. The Method of Prayer is a work remarkable, in that age of the world, as coming from a *woman*, and still more remarkable, when considered in contrast with the prevalent views and practices of the church of which the author was a member, which tended, as it seemed to her, to substitute the form for the substance, the ceremonial for the spirit. Its doctrines are essentially Protestant; making Faith, in distinction from the merits of works, the foundation of the religious life, and even carrying the power of faith in the renovation of our inward nature beyond what is commonly found in Protestant writers. It is proper to remark, however, that she always insisted that the doctrines which she advanced, were the true Catholic doctrines; and that the doctrines and practices she opposed were mistakes and perversions. Her work, entitled *Justifications de la Doctrine de Madame de la Mothe Guyon*, shows how well qualified she was to defend her position.

19. *Appeal to religious pastors and teachers.*

Near the close of the work she has some plain and affecting appeals to religious pastors and teachers. "The cause," she says, "of our being so unsuccessful in reforming mankind, especially those of the lower class, is our beginning with external matters; — [referring to the fact, undoubtedly, that almost everything in religion had assumed a *ceremonial* shape. Observances, which had relation to the outward action, were greatly multiplied, while the spirit of religion declined.] When we labor in this way, if we produce any fruit, it is fruit which perishes. We should begin with principles, which reach the interior, and tend to renovate the heart. A renovation there, reaches and improves the whole man, the *outward* as well as the inward. This is the true and the ready process; to teach men to seek and to know God in the heart — by affections rather than by forms. It is thus that we lead the soul to the fountain, the source of grace, where is to be found all that is necessary for our spiritual progress.

Impressed with the importance of the religion of the heart, I beseech all, who have the care of souls, to put them at once into the spiritual way. Preach to them Jesus Christ. He himself, by the precious blood he hath shed for those entrusted to you, conjures you to speak, not to that which is *outward*, but to the *heart* of his Jerusalem. Oh, ye dispensers of his graces, ye preachers of his word, ye ministers of his sacraments, labor to establish Christ's kingdom! As it is the heart alone, which can oppose Christ's sovereignty, so it is by the subjection of the heart that his sovereignty is most highly exalted. Employ means, compose catechisms, and whatever other methods may be proper, but aim at the *heart.* Teach the prayer of the heart, and not of the understanding; the prayer of God's spirit, and not of man's invention.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Continued and increased opposition at Grenoble. Conversation with a distinguished preacher. Effect of the publication of the Short Method of Prayer. Conversation with a poor girl, who had been spiritually aided and blessed through her efforts. Increased violence against her. State of her feelings. Advised by her friends to go to Marseilles. Descends the Rhone. Incidents in their voyage down the river. Arrives at the city of Marseilles. Excitement occasioned by her arrival there. Kind treatment of the Bishop of Marseilles. Opposition from others. Conversion of a priest. Acquaintance with a knight of the Order of Malta. Her interviews with M. Francois Malaval. Leaves Marseilles for Nice. Disappointed in going from Nice to Turin, she sails for Genoa. Reflections made by her in connection with her exposure on the ocean. Troubles at Genoa. Departs for Verceil. Met by robbers. Other trying incidents.

THE opposition to her labors in Grenoble, the commencement of which has already been mentioned, increased. It assumed different shapes, and was characterized by more or less of violence, as it was prosecuted by different persons. In some cases persons came to her, for the purpose of exposing her views, and of counteracting them by argument. At one time, she says, she was visited by a distinguished preacher of the city, a man of profound learning. She says, "he had carefully prepared himself on a number of difficult questions, which were to be proposed to me for my answer. It is true, that in some respects they were matters far beyond my reach; but I laid them before the Lord, and He enabled me to answer them promptly and satisfactorily, almost as much so as if I had made them the subjects of long study. My help was in the Lord, and in that wisdom which he gives to those who fully trust in him. This person was not only apparently convinced and satisfied, but went away, so far as could be judged, with a perception and experience of the love of God such as he had not known before."

2. The excitement, which existed against her, arose partly from religious conferences and other personal religious efforts, and partly and perhaps in a still higher degree, from her book on Prayer. This work, the Short Method of Prayer, had hardly been published, when some pious persons purchased fifteen hundred copies of it, and distributed them in the city and its neighborhood. The effect was very great. "God," she says, "had made me the instrument of great good; but Satan, who takes no pleasure in God's works, was greatly enraged. I saw clearly that the time had come, when he would stir up a violent persecution against me. But it gave me no trouble. Whatever I may be made to suffer by his attacks, I am confident that all will ultimately tend to God's glory."

3. "Among the subjects of the divine operation, during this time of religious interest, was a poor girl, who earned her livelihood by her daily labor; — a girl of great truth and simplicity of spirit, and one who, in her inward experience, was much favored of the Lord. At the time of which I am now speaking, she came to me one day, and said, 'Oh my mother, what strange things have I seen!' [Referring probably to some dream which she had recently experienced.] I asked what they were. 'Alas,' said she, 'I have seen you like a lamb in the midst of a troop of fierce wolves. I have seen a frightful multitude of people of all ranks and robes, of all ages, sexes, and conditions, priests, friars, mar-

ried men, maids and wives, with pikes, halberts, and drawn swords, all eager for your instant destruction. On your part, you stood alone, but without surprise or fear. I looked on all sides to see whether any would come to assist and defend you, but I saw not one.'

4. "Some days after this poor girl had spoken to me, those persons, who through envy were raising private batteries against me, broke forth furiously. Injurious and libellous statements began to be circulated. Some individuals, without any personal knowledge of me, wrote against me. Some said, that I was a sorceress, that it was by some magic power that I attracted souls, and that everything in me was diabolical. Others said, that, if I did some charities, it was because I coined, and put off false money; with many other gross accusations equally false, groundless, and absurd.

"But, amid all this, my soul, full of earnest desires, *thirsted*, if I may so express it, for the salvation of my fellow beings. It seemed to me, that I felt just as Christ felt when he entered into his *apostolic* state; that is to say, when he came out of his thirty years' retirement, and full of the Holy Ghost, began to preach publicly the way of salvation. He said to his disciples at a certain time, *With desire I have desired*, in other words, I have *exceedingly desired, to eat the passover with you.* Such was *my* desire; so great that when I could not speak, I wrote; and when I could not write, nor impart my strong desires in any other way, my system was overcome in the strength of my feeling, and I sunk under it."

5. But the providences of God seemed to indicate, that her mission at Grenoble, which had been so strikingly characterized by manifestations of the divine power, was ended. So violent was the tempest of indignation against her, that even her tried friends, anxious for her personal safety, advised her to leave. Camus, bishop of Grenoble, a man of learning and piety, was friendly to her. He was a Doctor of the

Sorbonne, and not long after was appointed Cardinal* by Pope Innocent II.; but he was not able, though obviously of favorable dispositions, to restrain the hostile movement, which now existed.

His Almoner, probably with the concurrence of the bishop himself, advised her strongly to leave the city and seek refuge in Marseilles, till the storm should be over. The Almoner gave as a reason for recommending the city of Marseilles as the place to which under the existing circumstances she should flee, that it was his native place, that there were many persons of merit there, and that he thought from his knowledge of the situation of things she would be favorably received. Looking to the Lord for direction, she felt it her duty to comply with these suggestions.

6. Leaving her daughter under the care of her favorite maid-servant, in the Religious House where she was placed on their first arrival, and taking with her another girl to supply her place about her own person, she left the city as secretly as possible; influenced in leaving in this manner, not more by a desire to defeat the machinations of her enemies, than by a fear of being burdened with the visits and lamentations of her friends. It was early in the Spring of the year 1686, — if we are allowed to deduce our chronology, not always from the statements made, which are sometimes inconsistent with each other, but from a comparison and adjustment of statements, — that she thus finished her mission at Grenoble, and again went out, not knowing, like the patriarch of old, "*whither she went.*" Accompanied by two females, one of them the girl who has just been mentioned, and by the Almoner of Bishop Camus, and another very worthy ecclesiastic, she took the route along the banks of

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* See Memoirs of the Court of France, from the year 1684 to the year 1720, by the Marquis de Dangeau. Vol. I. p. 76.

the river Isere, till it mingles with the Rhone, a little above the ancient city of Valence. At Valence they all embarked upon the Rhone in one of the numerous boats, that were employed in navigating its waters.

They had descended about three miles from the city, when they became satisfied that the boat, (which they had taken in the expectation of overtaking another larger one, but were disappointed in it,) would not answer their purpose. It was too small ; and they were under the necessity of returning. As the boat was heavily laden, and it was difficult to ascend the river with it, the passengers all left it and went back on foot, with the exception of Madame Guyon, who was unable to walk so long a distance, and a young lad who was supposed to be competent to take the boat back. Owing either to the violence of the river, or his want of skill and strength, or perhaps both, he found it a very difficult thing to do it. At one time he ceased his efforts entirely; and leaving the boat to the mercy of the waves, sat down and burst into tears, saying that they must both be drowned. Madame Guyon, seeing the imminent hazard to which they were exposed, went to him ; and by remonstrating with him and encouraging him, induced him to resume his efforts. After four hours of hard labor, they reached the city ; and her companions having arrived by land, they immediately took another boat more suited to their purpose.

Nothing is said of their stopping at any of the numerous towns and cities which adorn the banks of the Rhone. Beaucaire and Tarascon with their wealth and activity, Avignon with its benevolent institutions, Arles with its amphitheatre and obelisk and other remains of high antiquity, — all ceased to have attractions for those, who felt that they had no home in any place where Christ, preached in his simplicity, was likely to be excluded.

7. The navigation of the Rhone, which is one of the most

rapid rivers in Europe, is quite difficult. Madame Guyon says, that they met with many alarming accidents and wonderful preservations. At one place the boat ran upon a rock with such violence as to open it, and let in the water in such a manner as greatly to endanger them. There was great consternation among the persons on board; but she speaks with devout satisfaction and thankfulness of the peace and joy of mind, with which God sustained her in this threatening danger. The Almoner of Bishop Camus was so seated in the boat as distinctly to notice her at the time; and he was astonished to see, and made remarks upon it afterwards, that there was no sudden emotion of surprise, and no change on her countenance. "What caused my peace," she says, "in dangers which so terrified others, was my resignation to God, and because death is much more agreeable to me than life, if such were his will, to which I desire to be ever patiently submissive."

8. In this way they passed down, with great diligence and rapidity, nearly the whole navigable length of the Rhone, and then leaving the mouth of the river, and coasting a few miles along the shores of the Mediterranean, they reached the ancient and justly celebrated city of Marseilles; — a city so well and so favorably known, even in the time of Cicero, that he styled it the "Athens of the Gauls." But this great and learned city furnished no refuge for this fugitive praying woman. If an army had come among them, it would scarcely have caused greater consternation. "I arrived at Marseilles," she says, "at ten o'clock in the morning; *and that very afternoon all was in uproar against me.*"

9. The occasion of this very sudden movement against her was this. She had a letter of introduction to a knight, of the Order of Malta, resident at Marseilles. The letter was written by one of her intimate friends in the city of Grenoble, a man of rank, but eminently religious. Accom-

panying the letter, he sent the little book, entitled A Short Method of Prayer, which had been published a short time before at Grenoble; and of which we have given an analysis in the preceding chapter. Although a devout man himself, the knight to whom the book was sent had a chaplain, whose opinions were not only in opposition to those of Madame Guyon, but who felt unusually zealous in exhibiting that opposition. He had probably heard of the book before, and might perhaps have known what was in it. At any rate, when it was received, he examined it for a few moments, and perceiving, as he supposed, its heresies, he at once went away to stir up a party both against the doctrines of the book and its author.

So much interest was waked up, that some persons went almost immediately to the bishop of the city, stating to him that it was necessary to banish at once the author of a book which contained things so much at variance with what the Catholic church considered the truth. The bishop, however, before proceeding to extremity, thought it necessary to examine the book for himself, which he did in company with one of his prebends, and he said that *he liked it very well.*

10. Not only this, he took the pains also to send for individuals in whose judgment and piety he had confidence, among others for M. Francois Malaval, a man of great piety and of some literary eminence, and also for a Father of the Recollects, both of whom had known Madame Guyon by reputation, and had called upon her very soon after her arrival at Marseilles. They frankly stated to him their favorable opinions of Madame Guyon's character and writings, and also what they knew of the nature and extent of the violent opposition which she experienced. "In connection with this interview," says Madame Guyon, "the bishop testified much uneasiness at the insults which were offered me. He also expressed to these persons a strong desire for

a personal acquaintance; so much so, that I was obliged to go and see him. He received me with extraordinary respect, and begged my excuse for what had happened. He invited me to stay at Marseilles; and assured me, — notwithstanding the unpleasant circumstances existing, — that he would do all in his power to protect me. He even asked me where I lodged, that he might come and see me."

"The next day," she adds, "the Almoner of the Bishop of Grenoble, and the other ecclesiastic, who had accompanied us in our passage down the Rhone, went to see him. He received them kindly, and testified to them also his sorrow for the insults, which, without any good reason, had been offered me."

11. It was obvious, however, that a party was formed against her, with such elements of strength and violence in it, that she could not long remain in quiet. Among other insults offered to her, she says, "these persons wrote to me the most offensive letters possible, though at the same time they did not know me. It seemed to me, with these indications of His providence before me, that the Lord was beginning in earnest to take from me every place of abode; and those words of Scripture were again strongly impressed upon my mind; — '*The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has not where to lay his head.*'"

12. She remained at Marseilles eight days only. Short as was the time, and stranger as she was in the place, she was enabled to do something for that cause, which was dearer to her than reputation or even life. One day she entered into a church, in which some religious services were being performed. The priest, who had the direction of them, observed her; and after they were concluded, went immediately to the house in which she was lodged, and stated to her, with great simplicity and frankness his inward trials and necessities. "He made his statements," she re-

marks, "with as much humility as simplicity. The Lord assisted me, as an instrument in his hands, to say and to suggest those things to this person which seemed to be necessary. He was enabled, through divine grace, to receive and understand the truth in such a manner, so clearly and so promptly, that in a very short time he was filled with joy, and with thankful acknowledgments to God. He became a man of prayer, and a true servant of God."

Such was the happy result in the case of one, who for some years had suffered from anxiety of mind; an anxiety which would be naturally increased by the fact, that he himself was a minister at the altar; seeking, undoubtedly, an interest in Christ; but confused and burdened by the multiplicity of ceremonial observances, and ignorant of the simple and sure way of faith. It is in connection with this case, that Madame Guyon makes the remark, that in all the places where she had been subject to ill treatment and persecution, God had sustained her by some such striking manifestations of his love and grace.

13. During her short stay at Marseilles, she became acquainted with many pious persons. Among others was the knight of the celebrated Order of Malta, to whom she brought a letter of introduction from Grenoble. Though a member of a military Order, she found him, like the Roman centurion mentioned in the Acts, a "devout man, and one that feared God." "Since I have known him personally," she says, "I have esteemed him as a man whom our Lord designed to be of great service to others. It seemed to me, that the influence of his holy life would be an ornament and support of the Order, of which he was a member. I expressed my opinion to him personally, that it would be desirable for him to take up his residence at Malta in closer union with those with whom he was associated, and that God would assuredly make use of him to diffuse a spirit of piety

into many of them." In accordance with this advice, and perhaps under the influence of it, he soon after went to Malta; and such was the acknowledged excellence of his character, that he was almost immediately placed in a position of high authority and influence. But, further than this, although much was to be hoped from his labors, we find nothing said of him.

14. Her interviews with M. Francois Malaval must have been interesting, if he were the author, as I suppose him to have been, of the Treatise on the Inward or Contemplative Life,* which has already been mentioned in connection with the references to the author of the Spiritual Guide, Michael de Molinos. He was a man obviously of great intellectual power; but labored under the disadvantage of having been blind, or nearly so, from an early period of life. But God compensated for the want of outward light by inward illumination. So that he may be described as a man whose eye, closed to the world, had light in God; a man who saw *spiritually*.

In support of the remark, that he was a man of intellectual power I infer, not only from what he wrote, but from the fact, that he is frequently mentioned and criticised with earnestness and apparent severity, in the controversial writings of Bossuet, who was too conscious of his own vast strength to be likely to enter the lists with feeble antagonists. That he was a man of deep and thorough piety, I believe his opponents did not deny.

15. Satisfied from the various indications around her, that Marseilles was not to be the field of her labors, and not knowing whither to go, it occurred to her, that she might properly seek a place of refuge again with the Marchioness of Prunai. This lady, who still resided either at Turin or

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* Entitled in French, *Pratique Facile pour elever l'Ame à la Contemplation.*

in its immediate neighborhood, retained a strong friendship for Madame Guyon, and probably kept up a correspondence with her. At any rate, there seems to have been a mutual understanding between them, that she should have a home with the Marchioness, whenever it might be accordant either with necessity or convenience. Although in coming to Marseilles, she had gone a considerable distance from Grenoble, she had taken such a direction that she had not increased her distance from Turin, and had perhaps made it less. So that the suggestion, that she might best remain for a time with the Marchioness, was naturally sustained by the circumstance, that, in the situation in which she was placed, it was a nearer and easier place of refuge than any other which now presented itself.

16. Under these circumstances, accompanied by the same persons who came with her down the Rhone, with the exception of the Almoner of Bishop Camus who seems to have returned to Grenoble, she left Marseilles, on the ninth day after she arrived there, for the neighboring city of Nice. This ancient and pleasant city, situated near the Mediterranean on the banks of the river Var, lies in the direction of Turin, and about eighty miles distant. At a little distance from it are the mountains called the Maritime Alps.

"I took a litter at Marseilles," says Madame Guyon, "for the purpose and in the expectation of being conveyed once more to the residence of the Marchioness of Prunai, which seemed to me, in my present condition, to be the most honorable refuge I could seek. I supposed that I could reach her residence by passing through the city of Nice. Some persons assured me that I could do so. But when I arrived at Nice I was greatly surprised to learn that the litter, for some reasons, could not pass the mountains which intervened, and that I could not, at the present time at least, reach Turin in that direction. In this state of things I knew not what to do, nor which way to turn. My confusion and crosses seemed daily to increase. Alone as it were, in the world, forsaken of all human help, and not knowing what God required of me, I saw myself without refuge or retreat, wandering like a vagabond on the face of the earth. I walked in the streets; I saw the tradesmen busy in the shops; all seemed to me to be happy in having a home, a dwelling place to which they could retire. I felt sadly that there was none for me."

17. This was a season of trial and temptation; but we are not to infer from these expressions, that her faith was shaken. Faith is tested by trial; and oftentimes shines most brightly amid tears. — "As I was in this uncertainty, not knowing what course to take, a person," she adds, "came to me and told me, that one of the small vessels, which traded between Nice and the city of Genoa, and which usually reached Genoa within twenty-four hours, would sail the next day. He added, that if I took a passage on board the vessel, the captain would land me, if I chose, at the town of Savona, twenty miles this side of Genoa, but so situated in reference to the mountains, that I could readily find a conveyance to the Marchioness of Prunai's house. To this proposition I consented; as I could not be furnished with any other means of getting there."

18. It was under these circumstances, that she committed herself and those who were with her, to the dangers of the sea. "As I embarked upon it," she says, "I could not help experiencing emotions of joy. 'If I am the dregs of the earth,' I said to myself, 'if I am the scorn and the offscouring of nature, I am now embarked upon an element which, in its treachery shows no favor. If it be the Lord's pleasure to plunge me in the waves, it shall be mine to perish in them.' There came upon us a tempest, in a place which was somewhat dangerous for small vessels; and what rendered our situation the more trying, the mariners seemed

to be very wicked men. But still, as the irritated waves dashed around us, I could not help experiencing a considerable degree of satisfaction in my mind. I pleased myself with thinking that those mutinous billows, under the command of Him who does all things rightly, might probably furnish me with a watery grave. Perhaps I carried the point too far in the pleasure which I took, in thus seeing myself beaten and bandied by the swelling waters. Those, who were with me, took notice of my intrepidity; but knew not the cause of it. I asked of Thee, my Lord, if such were thy will, some little cleft to be placed in, a small place of refuge in some rock of the ocean, there to live separate from all creatures. I figured to myself, that some uninhabited island would have terminated all my disgraces, and put me in a condition of infallibly doing thy will. But, O my Divine Love, Thou didst design me a prison far different from that of the rock, and quite another banishment than that of the uninhabited island. Thou didst reserve me to be battered by billows, more irritated than those of the sea. Calumnies proved the outrageous, unrelenting waves, to which I was to be exposed, in order to be lashed and tossed by them without mercy.

" By the tempest swelling against us we were kept back; and instead of a short day's passage to Genoa, we were *eleven days* in reaching it. But during all this time, how peaceable was my heart in so violent an agitation around me! The swelling of the sea, and the fury of its waves, were, as I thought, only a figure of that swelling fury, which all the creatures had against me. I said to Thee, Oh, my Love, arm them all; make use of them all as instruments to humble me for my infidelities. I seemed to behold Thy right hand armed against me; but knowing that Thy will was never at variance with the utmost rectitude and benevolence, I loved, more than my life, the strokes it gave me."

19. It was owing to the storm probably, that she failed to be landed at Savona, and was carried to Genoa. It was only a year, or not far from a year before, that the French, irritated by some proceedings of the Genoese, had bombarded their city. A large naval force, under the command of the celebrated Admiral Duquesne, "reduced to a heap of ruins," as it is given in the language of Voltaire, "a part of those marble edifices, which have gained for Genoa the name of *the Superb.* Four thousand soldiers, being landed, advanced up to the gates of the city, and burned the suburbs of St. Peter d'Arena."* The Genoese, from that time, had been exceedingly irritated against the French. And when Madame Guyon and her little company landed, including the ecclesiastic who attended her, being recognized at once as people from France, they were exposed to the marked insults of the angry populace.

She thought it necessary, therefore, to leave Genoa as soon as possible; but she was met with another trial. The Doge, or Supreme Governor, had recently left the city for some purpose; and, with his attendants, had taken all the litters which could be had. "Owing to this," she says, "I could not obtain a conveyance of that kind, and was obliged to remain there several days at excessive expense; the charges being very much higher than they were for the same accommodations at Paris. I mention this, because I had but little money left; but I did not forget that my *store in Providence could never be exhausted.*"

20. After a few days and much inquiry, a sorry looking litter, which is a sort of covered couch, sometimes borne by porters and sometimes by beasts of burden, was brought her, supported by two lame mules. But here arose another difficulty. She did not, at that time, know precisely whether

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* Life of Louis Fourteenth, Vol. ii, chap. 13.

the Marchioness of Prunai, to whose house she wished to be carried, resided at Turin or at some place in the vicinity. The owner of the litter refused to make a bargain under such circumstances; but offered to take her to Verceil, which was somewhat nearer than Turin, being only two days' journey distant, but in a little different direction. As she could neither remain at Genoa, nor make arrangements at present to be carried to the residence of the Marchioness of Prunai, she adopted this alternative, as the one especially presented in Providence. And she had this reason for so doing among others, that she had, some time before, been repeatedly and earnestly invited by the Bishop of Verceil to come there. She thought it proper, however, that, under the existing circumstances, she should send notice to him of her coming. It was with this object, that the ecclesiastic, who had attended her from Marseilles, set out first; leaving Madame Guyon and her two female assistants to come by themselves.

21. With Providence for their guide, these three unprotected women set out from Genoa. "Our muleteer," she says, "was one of the most brutal of men to be met with. Seeing he had only women under his care, there was scarcely any bounds to his insolence and rudeness." Before they had completed the first day's journey, they passed through a large forest, which had the reputation of being infested with robbers, and which was so in fact.

"The muleteer," she adds, "was afraid, and told us, if we met any of them on the road, we should be murdered, for they spared nobody. Scarcely had he uttered these words, when there appeared four men *well armed.* They immediately stopped the litter. The muleteer was exceedingly frightened. I had no fear, and was so entirely resigned to Providence, that it was all one to die this way or any other, in the sea or by the hands of robbers. The robbers approached the litter and looked in. I smiled upon them and made a slight bow of the head. As soon as I had saluted them in this manner, in a moment, God made them change their design. Having pushed off each other, as if each were desirous of hindering the others from doing any harm, they respectfully saluted me, and with an air of compassion, unusual to such sorts of persons, retired. I was immediately struck to the heart, O my Lord, with a full and clear conviction, that it was thine own especial influence, a stroke of thine own right hand, who had other designs over me than thus to make me die by the hands of robbers."

22. In connection with what took place at this time, and calling to mind the dangers she had encountered in repeatedly crossing the Alps, and in visiting the Grand Chartreuse, she exclaims again; — "How wonderful, O my God, at this, as at many other times, has been thy protection over me! How many perils have I passed through in going over mountains, and on the edges of steep and terrible cliffs! How often hast Thou checked the foot of the mule, already slipping over the precipice! How often have I been exposed to be thrown headlong from frightful heights into hideous torrents, which, though rolling in chasms far below our shrinking sight, forced us to hear them by their horrible noise! Thou, O God, didst guard me in such imminent dangers. When the dangers were most manifest, then was my faith in Thee strongest. In Thee my soul trusted. I felt, that, if it were thy will, that I should be dashed headlong down the rocks, or drowned in the waters, or brought to the end of my life in any other way, it would all be well; the will of God, whatever it might be in relation to me, making every thing equal."

23. At the close of this day's journey, she found still further occasion for the trial of her faith and patience. "The muleteer," she says, "seeing me attended by only two

young women, thought he might treat me in any manner he pleased; perhaps expecting to draw money from me. We were approaching the village where we expected to remain, at the village Inn, during the night. What was our surprise, then, to hear the muleteer propose to us to stop at a mill, about a mile and a quarter short of the village; a place at which the muleteers sometimes stopped, but at which no female resided. In the mill there was only a single chamber, though there were several beds in it, in which the millers and muleteers lodged together. In that chamber, and in such company, these persons proposed to have me and my maid-servants stay. I remonstrated; and endeavored by every possible argument to induce the muleteer to carry us to the Inn, but without effect.

At ten o'clock at night, therefore, and in a strange place, we were constrained to leave our conveyance, and set out on foot, carrying a part of our clothes in our hands. The night was dark, the way unknown, and we were obliged to pass through the end of a forest, which was said to be the resort of plunderers. The muleteer, seeing us go off in this way, and disappointed in his evil designs upon us, hooted after us in a very abusive manner. I bore my humiliation resignedly and cheerfully, but not without feeling it."

They arrived safely at the Inn. The good people of the house, seeing them come at this late hour of the night, on foot, with their clothes in their hands, sympathized in their situation, and treated them very kindly. "They assured us," says Madame Guyon, "that the place we left was a very dangerous one; and did all in their power to recover us from the fatigue we had undergone."

24. The next morning, in consequence of an arrangement which was made by the muleteer, they left the litter in which they had come so far, and took passage in the post-chaise, or more properly post-wagon, which conveyed the

public mails, and passed along at this time. In this conveyance they reached Alexandria, one of the principal towns between Genoa and Verceil. "When the driver, according to his usual custom," says Madame Guyon, "took us to the post-house, I was exceedingly astonished, when I saw the landlady coming out, not to receive him, but to oppose his entrance. She had heard from some person, that there were women in the carriage, and mistaking our characters, and taking us for a different sort of persons from what we were, she protested against our coming in. On the other hand the driver was determined to force his entrance in spite of her. The dispute rose so high between them, that many officers of the garrison together with a vast mob of other persons, collected together at the noise, being much surprised at the odd humor of the woman in refusing to lodge us. I spoke to the mail carrier, and suggested, that it might be well to take us to some other house; but, obstinate upon carrying his point, he said, he would not. He assured the landlady, that we were not only persons of good character, but persons also of piety, the evidences of which he had seen. At last, by means of his statements and urgency, he obliged her to come and see us. As soon as she had looked upon us, she acted as the robbers had done. She relented at once, and admitted us.

"No sooner had I alighted from our conveyance, than she said to us, 'Go, shut yourselves up in that chamber hard by, and do not stir, that my son may not know you are here; for as soon as he knows it, he will kill you.' She said this with so much emphasis, which was repeated by the servant maid who attended her, that if death had not possessed many charms for me, I should have been ready to die with fear. The two girls, who were with me, were under frightful apprehensions. When they heard any one stirring in the house, and especially persons coming to open the door of the chamber for any purpose, they thought they were coming to cut their throats. In short, they continued in a dreadful suspense between life and death till the next day, when we learned that the young man had sworn to kill any woman who lodged at the house. The reason of his taking this extraordinary course was this. A few days before, an event had happened which came near ruining him. A woman of bad principles and life had lodged at his house. While there she had, for some reasons, privately murdered a man of some standing. The result was, beside other incidental evils, that a heavy fine was imposed upon the house; and it was not without reason that the young man, who seemed to have the chief charge of the establishment, was exceedingly afraid of any more such persons coming."*

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* La Vie de Madame Guyon, Pt. ii. ch. 23.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Arrives at Verceil. Interview with La Combe. Interview with the Bishop of Verceil. His kindness to her. Conversation with one of the Superiors of the Jesuits. Attacked with sickness. Decides to return to Paris. La Combe selected to attend her on her return. Departure from Verceil. Visit to the Marchioness of Prunai. Crosses the Alps, at the pass of Mount Cenis, for the third time. Meets her half-brother, La Mothe, at Chamberri. Her reception at Grenoble. Departs from Grenoble for Paris. Arrives at Paris, after a five years' absence, in July, 1686.

After some trials and adventures, such as have been related in the preceding chapter, she arrived safely at Verceil, the place where she designed to remain for the present; a pleasant and flourishing town, situated on the banks of the Sessia, one of the tributaries of the Po. Having stopped at one of the public inns, she sent notice of her arrival, as soon as she conveniently could, to Father La Combe, who was now resident at Verceil, having come there soon after he was obliged to leave Thonon. At Verceil, notwithstanding the persecutions he had experienced at Thonon, La Combe was highly esteemed. He exhibited that activity in the cause of vital religion, which would naturally be expected from his established character for piety. And God had made use of him as an instrument, in addition to other successful results of his labors, in converting several of the officers and soldiers stationed at the fortress at that place, who, from being men of scandalous lives, became patterns of piety.

2. It was with no small emotion that he met Madame Guyon again, who had been under God the early instrument of his spiritual renovation, and who had subsequently very much aided him in his religious progress. Add to this, that they were not only united in spirit, but had been sufferers together in a common cause; a cause which was inexpressibly dear to both of them. The feeling of satisfaction which he felt, however, in once more seeing her, was mingled with the fear, that a meeting so unexpected, and to many so inexplicable, might furnish new occasion for the calumnies of those who had already misrepresented and aspersed the relations existing between them. The knowledge of this danger had suggested itself also to Madame Guyon, who distinctly refers to it in some remarks.

3. As soon as the Bishop of Verceil heard of Madame Guyon's arrival, he sent his niece, who took her in a coach, and carried her to her own house. As soon as he conveniently could, he came himself in a chaise to his niece's house to see her. It was with some difficulty that Madame Guyon conversed in the Italian, and the bishop's knowledge of the French was imperfect. They were able, nevertheless, to make each other understood; so that the first interview was a pleasant one; and the satisfaction which he felt in making her acquaintance was subsequently much increased.

4. "The bishop," says Madame Guyon, "loved God; and it was but natural that he should love those who had similar dispositions. He could hardly have conceived a stronger friendship for me, if I had been his own sister. As an evidence of his favorable sentiments, he wrote to the bishop of Marseilles to thank him for having protected me in the persecution there. He wrote also with similar views, to Bishop Camus of Grenoble; and in various ways expressed

his interest and the affectionate regard he felt for me. Thinking only of finding out means to detain me in his diocese, he would not listen to my going, at present, to see the Marchioness of Prunai. On the contrary, he wrote to her to come and settle with me at Verceil. He even sent Father La Combe to her on purpose to exhort her to come; assuring her that he would unite us, together with some other pious persons, in a select Religious Society or Congregation, established for permanent religious objects. Neither the Marchioness nor her daughter, who was consulted in regard to it, disapproved of the plan; but she was prevented from entering into it, at present, by ill health."

5. "It was during the absence of La Combe on this business," she adds, "that I was visited by one of the superior officers or Rectors of the Jesuits, who was resident at this time at Verceil. He had heard of me, and wished to have some conversation. It is hardly necessary to say, that his knowledge on theological subjects was much greater than mine. We conversed together on topics of this nature; and he proposed to me several questions which he wished me to answer. The Lord inspired me to answer them in such a manner, that he went away, not only surprised at what was said, but apparently satisfied; so much so, that he could not forbear speaking of it afterwards."

6. Soon after her arrival at Verceil, she was attacked with sickness. "When the bishop," she says, "saw me so much indisposed, he came to see me with assiduity and charity, when at leisure from his occupations. He made me little presents of fruits and other things of that nature." When, however, he proposed to her the matter of a permanent residence at Verceil, she says that she had a presentiment that the plan would not succeed, and that it was not what the Lord had required of her. Still, being under great obligations to him for his kindness,

she thought it best to let him take what measures he might think proper for the present; being assured that the Lord would know well how to prevent arrangements which should not be in accordance with his will. And accordingly the plan was not only delayed by her present ill health, but was entirely frustrated and given up, by its being ascertained that the air of the place was exceedingly injurious to her, and that, in the opinion of the physicians who were consulted, it would not be possible for her to remain there. Upon the announcement of this state of things, the bishop, although he was much afflicted, did not hesitate to acquiesce in it. He remarked, that he was exceedingly sorry to have her go, but that he would much rather have her *live* somewhere else, though at a distance from him, than *die* at Verceil.

7. When it was ascertained, that she could not remain long at Verceil, her friends consulted together in relation to the course which it would be proper for her to pursue.

The conclusion was, that, under the developments which had been made of the influence she was capable of exercising, it was best for her to return to Paris, as a field of labor more appropriate to the powers God had given her, than those remote and rude villages where she had expected to spend her days. As soon as it was settled, after suitable deliberation and prayer, that she should return again not only to France but to Paris, "the Lord," she says, "wrought in my mind the conviction, that I was destined to experience yet greater crosses, than had hitherto come upon me. Father La Combe, who was now of opinion that Providence called me back to that trying scene of labor, had the same convictions. Nevertheless he encouraged me to resign myself to the divine will, and to become a victim offered freely to new sacrifices."

8. During the few months of her residence at Verceil, it loes not appear that she engaged much in what might be

called her *public* labors; such as have already been mentioned in repeated instances. Her health was, at present, not adequate to it. She continued, however, the work which she had begun at Grenoble, of writing explanations on the Scriptures. Her remarks on the Apocalypse were written at this time, namely, in the spring and early part of the summer of 1686. She was enabled also to keep up her written correspondence, which was extensive. It is worthy of notice perhaps, that it was at this time that her correspondence commenced with the Duchess de Chevreuse, a lady eminent both by her virtues and her position in society. We shall probably have occasion to mention her hereafter.

9. When Madame Guyon travelled, she was generally attended by some ecclesiastic. That was the custom of the times for religious persons in her situation in society. It was obviously necessary, for the most part, that she should have some male attendant; and a regard to public opinion seemed to require, that he should be one, who, both by profession and character, should be above suspicion. In leaving Verceil, after it was ascertained that the climate would not allow her to remain, she selected La Combe, in accordance with the opinion of her friends and others whom she thought it proper to consult, as the person most suitable, under all the circumstances of the case, to go with her. Perhaps no other suitable person could be easily found, who was ready, at a brief notice, to undertake so long a journey. There was a special reason, moreover, for this selection, additional to his high personal character, his ecclesiastical calling, and the fact of his being, in accordance with the institutions of the Catholic church, her spiritual Director. Some arrangements of the Religious Order or Association of the Barnabites, to which he belonged, arrangements which were carried into effect by their Superintendent or General, required the presence of La Combe at Paris at this time. The move-

ments of the subordinate members were, in general, under the control of the person who sustained the relation of head of their community. The suggestion, therefore, that La Combe should accompany Madame Guyon, was favorably received by the General of the Order, whom it was necessary to consult in the case, as a thing not only proper in itself, but because the expenses of his journey there, being of course paid by her, would exempt the House of that Order at Paris, which was already poor, from an assessment to meet them. The arrangement, therefore, was made. As it was necessary, however, that La Combe should attend to some transactions of the business at the intermediate places, it was decided, that he should set out some days before her, and wait for her at the entrance of the passage over the Alps, as a place where attendance and assistance would be indispensably necessary.

10. After a stay, therefore, of a few months at Verceil, which was pleasant in every respect with the exception of the poor state of her health, she set out on her return by the usual route of Turin and Mount Cenis. "My departure," she says, "was a season of trial to the Bishop of Verceil. He was much affected. He caused me to be attended *at his own expense*, as far as Turin, giving me a gentleman and one of his own ecclesiastics to accompany me."

11. It was under these circumstances, that she closed her mission abroad; a mission not more interesting in its results than it was novel in its nature; and commenced her return to Paris. She had occasion once more to feel the force of the sentiment which she has so well expressed in her poems;

To me remains nor place nor time;
My country is in every clime.

La Combe, before he left, wrote her a letter for her encouragement under the trials which he foresaw awaited both her and himself; in which he said, "Will it not be a thing very glorious to God if he should make us serve, in the great city of Paris, for a spectacle to angels and men?" "I departed," she says, "*in the spirit of sacrifice;* ready to offer myself up to new varieties and kinds of suffering. All along the road, something within me repeated the very words of St. Paul, 'I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things which shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesses, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me; but none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy.' I found it my duty to hold on my way, and to sacrifice myself for Him who first sacrificed himself for me."

12. In her way to the city of Turin, she turned aside to visit the Marchioness of Prunai, who seems to have resided a few miles distant from the city. "She was extremely rejoiced," says Madame Guyon, "to see me once more. Nothing could be more frank and affectionate than what passed between us." Madame Guyon seems to have been deeply impressed with the kindness and piety of this distinguished lady. But she did not remain long at the resting place, which would have been gladly given to her here. Leaving with the Marchioness her sweet words of encouragement in relation to her benevolent labors, especially for the poor and the sick, and bidding her, after a few days' tarrying, a final adieu, she went on her way.

At Turin she was left by the attendants furnished by the Bishop of Verceil. Accompanied from that place by her two maids, she obtained a conveyance, and travelling the usual route along the Doria to Susa, she met La Combe again, at some place near the foot of the Alps.

13. Of the incidents attending her passage through these rugged declivities and summits, now ascended and surmounted for the third time, she makes no special mention. No

doubt, as she looked down from those vast heights on the land of the Po and the Adige, a land she loved, she breathed forth the fervent prayer of her heart, for its spiritual renewal. This prayer, which she uttered alike in spoken words and in silent aspirations, in prose and in poetry, continually arose from her heart, for all lands and all nations.

"Ah, reign, wherever man is found,
My Spouse, beloved and divine!
Then am I rich, and then abound,
When every human heart is thine.

A thousand sorrows pierce my soul,
To think that all are not thine own;
Ah, be adored from pole to pole; —
Where is thy zeal? *Arise — Be known.*"

To the pleasant land she was thus leaving, there is no question that she would have given her *labors* as well as her prayers, her life as well as her affections. But that higher prayer of the heart, which says under all circumstances, THY WILL BE DONE, lays our hopes and our sympathies on the same altar on which it lays our prayers and our labors. She saw Italy no more.

14. Having passed the Alps in safety, she arrived at Chamberri, the principal town of Savoy. Here she met with her half-brother La Mothe, whom she had not seen for a number of years. Business of an ecclesiastical nature had called him there at this time. The meeting was apparently cordial, although there was too much reason to think, that he was determined to take a course which would be injurious to Madame Guyon. La Combe thought it expedient to consult one who sustained so near a relation, on the propriety of the arrangement which required him to attend Madame Guyon to Paris; expressing an entire willingness and even desire, in view of circumstances which seemed

about to develope themselves, to resign his place to some other person. La Mothe, who was himself an ecclesiastic, approved of the arrangement as it then was, and expressed a strong desire, that it should be carried through.

15. From Chamberri she proceeded to Grenoble, where one of the females who attended her into Italy belonged. She remained at Grenoble a number of days. She here met her daughter, now ten years of age, and the maid-servant, with whom she had left her when she went to Marseilles. When it was understood in the city, that she had returned, a great number of persons, whom she had been the instrument of spiritually benefiting when she had formerly resided there, visited her, and were filled with joy at seeing her again. But their joy was changed into sorrow, when it was understood that she must soon leave them. Their feelings seem to have been the same with those of the Ephesians, when the Apostle Paul visited them for the last time. "They wept sore, and fell on his neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, *that they should see his face no more.*"

Camus, bishop of the city, a man of marked and high character, manifested great kindness during her stay. Public opinion had so much changed in her favor since her departure, that she was now requested to remain, to be employed in connection with one of the Hospitals of the city. To this proposition she did not accede, because she saw distinctly, that it was not the place where God required her to be.

16. In order to show what were the feelings of the Bishop of Grenoble towards her, I think it may be proper to insert here a letter, which he wrote a year or two after in her behalf, when he had been raised to the Cardinalship. It is addressed to his brother, a distinguished man, who at that time,

according to the memoirs of D'Angeau, held the office of Lieutenant Civil of the city of Paris.

"Sir,

"I cannot refuse to the virtue and piety of Madame de la Mothe Guyon the recommendation she desires me to give you, in favor of her family, in an affair which is before you. I should have made some scruple of doing it, if I did not know the uprightness of her intentions and your integrity. Admit, therefore, my solicitations to do her all the justice that is due her. I request it of you with all the cordiality with which

"I am yours,

"THE CARDINAL CAMUS."

Accompanying the above, he wrote the following to Madame Guyon:

"Madame,

"It would give me great satisfaction if I had more frequent opportunities of showing you, how great is the interest which I feel in your welfare both temporal and spiritual. I am truly grateful that the suggestions I made in relation to your spiritual concerns have been found serviceable. In respect to your temporal affairs, I shall use my best endeavors to engage my brother, the Lieutenant Civil of Paris, to see that entire justice is rendered to you. Trusting that you will continue to entertain the fullest confidence in my favorable dispositions towards you, I remain, Madame,

"Very truly and affectionately,

"Yours,

"THE CARDINAL CAMUS."

17. She spent about a fortnight in Grenoble; and then, accompanied by Father La Combe, her daughter, and her female assistants, she set out for Paris; probably going through Lyons and on the main route through those two great cities. There is some uncertainty in the dates, which are given in this period of her life. Writing from memory, some time after the occurrences she relates, and under all the disadvantages of being shut up in prison, she has probably confounded the arrangement of facts and of periods of time to some extent. We have compared statements and dates, and have arranged and re-adjusted them to the best of our power.

She arrived at Paris the 22*d of July*, 1686, *five years after her departure from the city.*

She returned; but it is hardly necessary to say, that it was not to lay down her armor and to take her rest. In the loss of her own will, she came to Paris, probably the most trying field of labor that could have been selected, simply because God chose it for her. And that was enough. She knew not what the Lord had before her, and what he designed for her, either in doing or suffering; but the true spiritual life was within her, *God's* life, which, in being a divine life, corresponds to the divine purposes; a life which knows no compromise, seeks no favor, fears no evil. She was now in the thirty-ninth year of her age; young enough, with God's assistance, to continue to do effectual work in his cause, and old enough to have gained wisdom from experience, and strength from trial. But in every situation, she had one unalterable conviction, which was the true source of her power, *that she had nothing in herself, but all in God.*

18. The following striking stanzas from her Poems seem to me to form an appropriate conclusion to this volume:

"*Yes! I will always love;* and, as I ought,
Tune to the praise of love my ceaseless voice;
Preferring love, too vast for human thought,
In spite of erring men, who cavil at my choice.

Why have I not a thousand, thousand hearts,
Lord of my soul! that they might all be thine?
If thou approve, — the zeal thy smile imparts,
How should it ever fail! Can such a fire decline?

Love, pure and holy, is a deathless fire;
Its object heavenly, it must ever blaze;
Eternal love, a God must needs inspire,
When once he wins the heart and fits it for his praise.

Self-love dismissed; — 'tis then we live indeed;
In *her* embrace, death, only death is found;
Come then, one noble effort, and succeed,
Cast off the chain of SELF, with which thy soul is bound.

Oh! I would cry, that all the world might hear,
Ye self-tormentors, love your God alone;
Let his unequalled excellence be dear,
Dear to your inmost souls, and make him all your own."

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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